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Anton Dolin, principal male dancer and Artistic Director of Festival Ballet (*Photo: Lido*)

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November, 1950 Vol. I. No. II

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS

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Cover Story

Our cover this month, by Houston Rogers, shows ALICIA MARKOVA who on the day that this publication appears should have returned to London in Festival Ballet at the Stoll Theatre.

It is odd to think that this first great classical English ballerina became one by mistake. As a child she had frail physique and her doctor suggested that dancing would be a good thing to strengthen her. So Mr. and Mrs. Marks took their daughter to a local dance academy at Palmer's Green where she was so successful that she received an offer to appear in George Shurley's 1920 Christmas pantomime at the Kennington Theatre, *Dick Whittington.*

As it seemed that she had a future as a dancer, her mother took her to the great Russian teacher, Astafieva. It was here that Diaghilev, on the look-out for talent, saw her and engaged her for his company. He changed her name to Markova, put her in the last line of the *corps de ballet*, moving her up each season until she was dancing solo roles. She danced Red Riding Hood in the *Sleeping Princess ;* the *pas de trois* in *Lac des Cygnes ;* the Child in *Boutique Fantasque ;* the Bluebird *pas de deux* in the *Sleeping Princess ;* the title role in *La Chatte ;* the title role in *Le Rossignol* was created for her.

After Diaghilev died in 1929, she danced in Music Halls and at Marie Rambert's Ballet Club at the Mercury Theatre. When the Vic-Wells Ballet was formed in 1931 she became principal ballerina. There she remained until 1935 when she formed, with Anton Dolin, the Markova-Dolin company, which gave seasons in London and was the first company to tour the English provinces. When that company broke-up in 1938, she joined Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and has since appeared as guest artist with many companies and toured the world giving concert performances with Anton Dolin.

As a dancer she has unsurpassed lightness and her artistry makes her soft flowing movements appear completely effortless. She has a quality that makes it possible for her to shine in any role whether it be modern or classical.

We apologise to Denis de Marney who was not credited with last month's cover picture of Krassovska in *Beau Danube.* For the information of readers, he has now moved his studio to 33, Upper Brook Street, Mayfair, London, W.1 (Telephone number, MAYfair 6429).

Contributors

ELSA BRUNELLESCHI is the greatest teacher of Spanish dancing in England. She is now the permanent television critic on DANCE AND DANCERS. On page 19 she writes about the most important programmes last month.

RAY POWELL is one of the principal character dancers of the Sadler's Wells Ballet. He is sending a weekly account of the company and how they are received in America (page 23).

R. ROCKINGHAM GILL has recently returned after two years in Moscow. He writes about his impressions of the ballets and dancers that he saw there (pages 9 and 10).

Next month

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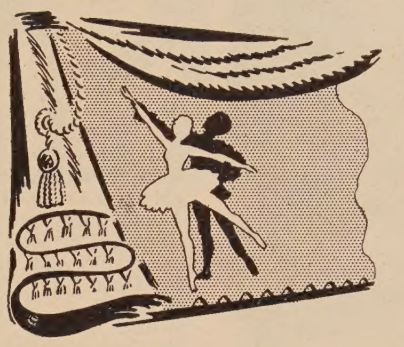

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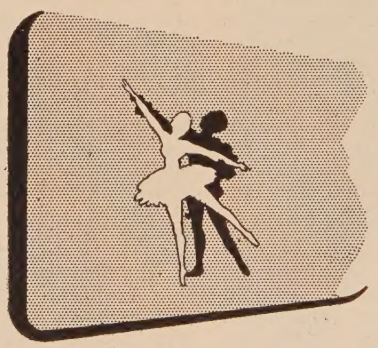

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Nora Kaye "The World's greatest dramatic ballerina"

ONE of our first post-war visitors was Ballet Theatre, and immediately they established a place in the affections of London balletgoers. They came, we went, we saw and they conquered. Now they have returned after a four years absence, with some new ballets, new dancers and old favourites, and most of us were delighted to have them with us again.

THE NEW BALLETS—

The first new work of the season was Balanchine's *Theme and Variations* (first performed in 1947 with Alonso and Youskevitch) to Tchaikovsky's Variations on a theme from Suite No. 3 in G, op. 55, and the curtain rises on Youskevitch and Alonso in the centre of the stage, with six girls behind each of them. The score consists of twelve variations; for the first nine the ballet is a divertissement, the stage being cleared after each variation, and the ballet ends with a *pas de deux* and grand finale. In its form it somewhat resembles the divertissement act of a Maryinsky ballet, but there are no character dances and Balanchine makes more use of the *corps de ballet*. Of particular interest among the dances is the seventh variation, a long and exciting solo for Youskevitch, and the eighth, a charming *adage* for Alonso supported by eight girls. The tenth and eleventh variations are used for a very beautiful *pas de deux*, composed in a more romantic style than the rest of the choreography, and the twelfth is a polonaise for the entire ensemble, in which the twelve girls are joined by cavaliers. This polonaise is typical Balanchine dance-orchestration, and looks strangely like a kind of first draft for the Fête Polonaise of *Bourrée Fantasque*. The whole ballet is a further statement of Balanchine's belief in the classical dance and the work can take its place among the best of its *genre*. The dancing is not fettered to the music and the invention is as fresh and fluent as ever. The dances composed for Youskevitch are the best male choreography we have seen in recent Balanchine, but unfortunately the dancing of the *corps de ballet* left half of everything to be desired; the décor and costumes by Woodman Thompson are most unsuitable.

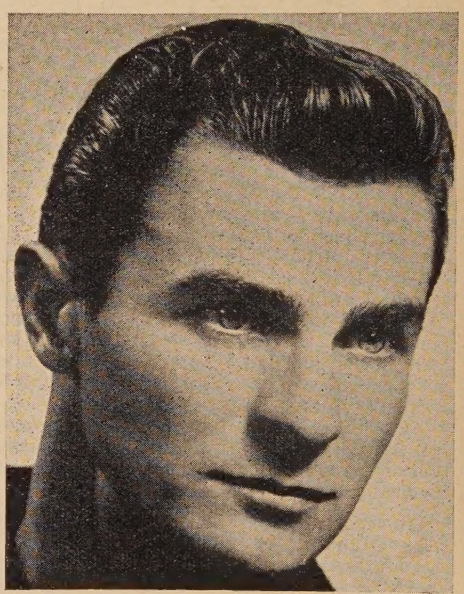
Agnes de Mille's *Rodeo* (first performed by Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1942, with Franklin—Champion Roper, de Mille—Cowgirl, Kokitch—Head Wrangler and Mladova—Ranchowner's daughter) is a horse-opera without singing, and tells of the struggle of a girl to get a man. The choreography is not very distinguished, and appears to be strongly influenced by *Billy the Kid*. The most interesting features of the ballet choreographically are those taken from American folk-dance, including a fascinating square-dance performed without music, the rhythm being provided by the clapping of the audience and the dancers themselves. The ballet is good fun in a heavy-handed manner, and has considerable assistance from a fine score by Aaron Copland. The scenery by Oliver Smith is pleasant, the costumes bright and colourful.

As the Champion Roper, a kind of Playboy of the Western World, John Kriza underlined the choreographer's already far from subtle jokes with all that hearty gusto associated with American-Show-Business. As the Head Wrangler James Mitchell was efficient, while Charlyne Baker played the unrewarding part of the Ranch-Owners' daughter. Allyn McLerie, who comes straight from Broadway, danced with a pert prettiness as the Cowgirl, and went quicker to the heart of the audience than the wind. For me the funniest moments were provided by Ruth Ann Koesun as a zany ranch-girl. The whole company danced as though they enjoyed the ballet as much as the audience, and the audience loved it. At one performance Paul Godkin took over the Champion Roper and danced it well, but with a rather sketchy characterisation.

Eugene Loring's *Billy the Kid* (first performed by Ballet Caravan in 1938, with Loring—Billy; Marie-Jeanne—Mother and Sweetheart; Bolender—Alias; and L. Christensen—Pat Garrett) tells of the adventurous life of William Bonney, a legendary American character. The ballet starts with an Opening March of the Pioneers which serves as a proloque to the whole work. The next scene shows Billy as a child, the accidental shooting of his mother and his subsequent revenge on her murderer, Alias. This leads straight on to " Billy's Soliloquy ", where Billy (fully-grown) is seen perfecting his card-sharping technique and performs a dance-manifesto of his belief in violence. After numerous shootings, capture, escape and a dream-encounter with his Mexican sweetheart, he is betrayed by Alias (as an Indian guide) to Pat Garrett, who tracks him down and finally shoots him. There is then a Mourning Dance of Mexican women, and the ballet ends with the Closing March of the Pioneers.

Dr. Johnson, writing of Dryden, said, " Of an art universally practised, the first teacher is forgotten ". Although only twelve years have elapsed since Loring created *Billy the Kid*, many of his original ideas have been debased into clichés. The first startling novelty of the ballet must inevitably be lost to us, but even on its intrinsic merits *Billy the Kid* is a fine wotk. It shows a remarkable degree of balletic stylisation; horses, guns, daggers, cards are all cleverly and convincingly indicated by dance movement. The story is clearly told with little aid from either programme notes or mime. The *corps de ballet* is used with great skill, the intricate crowd movements and the " gun-battle " being particularly effective. The way in which characterisation arises from the dancing could provide a model for young choreographers, for example Billy's Soliliquy, with its fast turns, stamping feet and the sinister sideways leap with which it ends, gives an intelligible portrait of the bandit, bullying, boasting and deadly.

The symbolism by which Alias (Billy's nemesis, according to the programme) is throughout the ballet being killed, and then returning as someone else, is rather confusing. Lincoln Kirstein, who had a large hand in the scenario, in his book *Blast at Ballet* says, " we saw the Kid's life as only a fragmentary, if symbolic, incident in the expansion of our vast frontier ". It is this conception that the March of the Pioneers at the beginning and end of the ballet is intended to convey.



John Kriza "A character dancer with warmth, personality and great artistry"

In the name part John Kriza gave a fin: bravura performance, well-danced and well-characterised. Alicia Alonso danced the dual role of Mother-Sweetheart with a ender restraint which provided a contrast to the roughness of the other characters (this role was later taken with success by both Norma Vance and Ruth Ann Koesun), Peter Gladke was good as the sheriff Pat Garrett, and Paul Godkin did his best to make something of the fleeting character of Alias. Copland's score is again excellent.

Lizzie Bordon took an axe
And gave her father forty whacks,
When she saw what she had done
She gave her step-ma forty-one.

This, briefly, is the story of Agnes de Mille's ballet *Fall River Legend* (first performed in 1948 with Alonso—Accused, Kriza—Pastor, Bently—Stepmother, Gladke—Father and Adams—Mother). The ballet opens at the trial of Lizzie, with the accusation being read out by the Speaker for the Jury, and we are then presented with a series of flashbacks into Lizzie's life. We see the death of her mother

and all the subsequent events, including a frustrated flirtation with the local Pastor, leading up to her attack on her Father and Step-mother with malice-aforethought and an axe. The boredom of the Bordon household is very realistically presented (I knew just how the poor girl was feeling) and towards the end, after the bloody deed, we see Lizzie undergoing psychological sublimation in a celestial encounter with her Mother. The end of the ballet takes us back to the beginning and Lizzie is left hysterical at the gallows. Some time before the end I found myself sympathising more with Lizzie's motives for homicide than with her procrastination.

The aim of tragedy should be catharsis, the purging of the soul, by which the audience is left with " all passion spent " ; as I was left at the end of *Fall River Legend* with all patience spent. It is given a fine performance, James Mitchell as the Pastor, Lucia Chase as the

Paul Godkin "one of the most interesting dancers new to London"

Step-mother, and Peter Gladke in his original role are all excellent, and as for Nora Kaye as Lizzie, this is a better starring vehicle than any street-car, and she is magnificent. This is a performance in the great tradition of acting, her face is the mirror of her soul and her whole body has a twisted eloquence. However, we must distinguish between the performance which a ballet receives and the ballet itself.

It is said of Chaliapin that he gave a fine performance in Boito's *Mefistophele*, but this did not raise Boito's work into the category of great operas. In the same way Kaye's performance cannot raise *Fall River Legend* to anything more than a second-rate ballet, drawn-out and platitudinous. The choreography, apparently deeply influenced by Tudor, lacks that master's reticence, taste, originality and sixth sense which enables him in a dramatic ballet to skirt drama but never to leave ballet. Agnes de Mille's choreography, although quite interesting when, as in the prayer-meeting scene, she seems to derive from American folk-idiom, has a quality which may perhaps be termed " Hollywood ", and she is easily beguiled by the cheap laugh or the melodramatic situation. Within limits she is always slickly successful, her ballets are superbly theatrical (as a producer she is almost the equal of, say, Elia Kazan), but I have yet to see a work by her, and this is the best London has seen, that is of any considerable importance in contemporary ballet. The score for *Fall River Legend* by Morton Gould is effective, the costumes by Miles White realistic, and the scenery by Oliver Smith excellent though reminiscent of Jo Mielziner. I feel I must add that the ballet was exceptionally well-received by public and press, and many ballet goers, whose opinions I value highly, considered it a fine work.

Interplay *choreography Jerome Robins, music Morton Gould, "One of the happiest ballets in any repertoire"*

Jerome Robbins' *Facsimile* (first performed in 1947 with Kaye, Kriza and Robbins) is called " a choreographic observation ", and has many excellent ideas. The ballet is based on a quotation, " Small inward treasure does he possess who, to feel alive, needs every hour the tumult of the street, the emotion of the theatre, and the small talk of society." The scene is " a lonely place ", the time " the number of minutes the ballet runs, or that many days, weeks, months or years ", the cast, " three insecure people ". The theme is treated symbolically. A woman (Nora Kaye) is alone on the beach, she is joined by a man (James Mitchell) and they make love. Soon another man (John Kriza) appears, is introduced to the woman, who is attracted to him. Attracted to both men, she finds herself at the apex of an eternal triangle of forces, until, finding the tension unbearable, she breaks away from both her lovers, audibly sobbing (in the original production I believe she cried out, " Stop it ! "). The three people leave in different directions.

This symbolic representation of the shallow, discontented mind is easy to follow, yet I must admit the ballet did not greatly impress me. As it was well-performed, I blame Robbins' choreography for this. A protracted *pas de deux* or *pas de trois* is probably the hardest choreographic form to manage, as the focus of the audience's attention is restricted, and Robbins was unequal to this challenge. A graver fault was the absence of characterisation in the individual dances, and there is falsely-contrived climax when the Woman suddenly bursts out sobbing, after, what look to the spectator, to be fairly innocous beach games. This struck me as a ballet not without merit, but hardly of the standard which we have come to expect from Robbins, particularly when in collaboration with Bernstein and Smith, the team which had previously produced *Fancy Free* and later *Age of Anxiety*.

The last new work of the season was Herbert Ross' *Caprichos* (first performed by Choreographer's Workshop in 1950), a ballet based on Goya's commentaries to his Caprichos etchings. There is a spoken epilogue in Spanish, " El Sueno de la razon produce monstruos " (The dream of reason produces monsters) and this can well serve as the argument of the ballet. The work is in four episodes. the two girls of the first remain on stage throughout the performance, acting both as a connecting link between the episodes and as " décor " for the otherwise bare stage.

This is not a pleasant ballet, being full of the bitter cynicism and sensuality of Goya. Certainly the choreographer has caught the mood of his artist, and has produced a strangely disquieting theatrical experience. When I wish to savour the grotesque, individual qualities of Goya, I prefer to do it myself, rather than through the agency of any choreographer. Nevertheless this ballet is by no means a negligible achievement. Ross seems to be a man of ideas, and although *Caprichos* is more notable for its sensitivity and production than its choreography, it is a very promising second ballet, The costumes by Helene Pons do Goya proud, but about the choice of music used, Bartok's *Contrasts* for Violin, Piano and Clarinet, I am less happy.

(*continued overleaf*)

Alicia Alonso in Giselle

(*continued from page seven*)

THE OLD BALLETS

Two ballets, although not new to London, were new productions by Ballet Theatre, *Designs with Strings* and *Giselle*. John Taras' ballet caused quite a stir when it was first produced by the Metropolitan Ballet in 1948, but I was very disappointed with this present version. Part of this disappointment doubtless arises from having seen the new Balanchine repertory (especially *Serenade*) and the accompanying realisation that the Taras ballet is not as original as it first seemed, but even so it is still good enough to stand on its own merits, and its failure to do so must rest with the quality of this revival. The cast was headed by Moylan and Kriza (or, on one occasion, by Vance and Lland) who all danced competently, but missed the touching quality of youthful disillusionment that was given to it by its original Metropolitan cast. The ballet was not helped by Irene Sharaff's unflattering costumes.

Since their last visit Ballet Theatre have had *Giselle* redesigned by Eugene Berman. The production revival is still attributed to Anton Dolin, although I think we are entitled to doubt the strict accuracy of this, as it has been considerably changed (for the worse) since 1946, and I do not believe that Dolin has worked with the company at any time during this period. The old Lucinda Ballard designs were lacking in character, and this is about the one thing of which no one could accuse the present production. I think that old ballets should be given a period setting, and consequently I am faintly shocked by the present designs. The scenery is quite good, but not for *Giselle*, and the costumes are often ridiculous. In the Second Act the Wilis (although Giselle's Persil-white was the exception to prove the irreverent rule) were dressed in blue-black. A similar lack of regard for tradition marked the production, for example Giselle instead of stabbing herself died of a heart-attack, and the dancing of the *corps de ballet* was not the kind you would want to remember in a will, or, indeed, anywhere else.

Both Kaye and Alonso appeared as Giselle, Youskevitch was the Albrecht, and Moylan the Myrtha. Kaye's English début as Giselle could have been an important occasion, but for a variety of reasons it was not. She underplayed the First Act (perhaps she was afraid of ranting), and the adamantine brilliance of her dancing is ill-suited to the wraith-like Romantic style. Alonso's performance, on the other hand, was very distinguished. What four years ago was a weak carbon-impression of Markova, has now become a fine interpretation worthy of comparison with the two or three really satisfactory Giselles of this decade. The unaffected First Act, closing with a fine "grand manner" mad scene, is matched by a Second Act which has something of the spectral quality, possessed by Markova, and Markova alone. Youskevitch's Albrecht is certainly the best-danced London has seen for years. His portrayal of the character does not rank with Dolin's, but it is well-conceived and a few apparent flaws in his performance may have been due to the production.

There were only two Tudor works in the repertory, *Pillar of Fire* and *Romeo and Juliet*. *Pillar of Fire* is a great ballet, possibly Tudor's masterpiece, and Kaye repeated her old triumph as Hagar. Hugh Laing is badly missed as the Young Man, his successor James Mitchell having little of the lithe, animal vitality the part requires. Norma Vance is greatly improved as the Youngest Sister; whereas before she was sickly sweet, she now gives a spirited sketch of a spiteful, hateful adolescent, which I imagine is more in keeping with the choreographer's original conception. I suppose the two outstanding qualities of Shakespeare's early tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*, are lyricism and serenity; both of these qualities are recaptured in Tudor's ballet. Normally I dislike Shakespearean ballet, but with this I make an exception, although I grant as a weakness that some knowledge of the story is essential for the ballet's intelligibility. Youskevitch's Romeo (more romantic and less intense than Laing's) and Kaye's Juliet were both admirable; Peter Gladke and Eric Braun danced Tybalt and Mercutio with style and dignity. Berman's wonderful décor and costumes give the ballet the air of a Renaissance pageant.

Fancy Free and *Interplay*, Jerome Robbins' first two ballets are two of the happiest works in any repertory, and both received brilliant performances. Kriza as the second sailor in *Fancy Free* was as good as ever, Braun brings his *élan* to the exhibitionist first sailor, and as third sailor Godkin has more technique and more teeth than Robbins, its creator, even if he lacks a little of Robbins' subtlety. As the girls, while both Vance and Paula Lloyd were good as the *pas de deux* girl, Muriel Bently and Shirly Eckl were badly missed as the other two pick-ups. *Interplay* produced some of the best dancing of the season, Godkin had a sly, genial humour in the Variation which was also a marvel of neat execution; Kriza and Paula Lloyd or Koesun, were all charming in the *pas de deux*.

The programmes also usually included one of four classical pas de deux, *Bluebird*, *Don Quixote*, *Nutcracker* or *Black Swan*.

John Kriza and Ruth Ann Koesun in the third movement of Caprichos, *in which Kriza does a remarkable dance with a dead body*

THE DANCERS——

On paper the roster of dancers assembled for this season was less formidable than that of 1946, but in fact the general level of accomplishment was higher. Nora Kaye is in a class by herself as the world's greatest dramatic ballerina, she is a magnificent artist. However, although her technique is strong she lacks the true classical ballerina style, and would do well to avoid such roles as the *Black Swan*. Alicia Alonso is greatly improved, restrained, unaffected, she will never earn the popular plaudits gained by many flashier, but lesser, dancers; she will delight all who respect reticence and style in an artist. Mary Ellen Moylan is probably the great disappointment of the season. Prejudging her reports from America I was rather expecting a dancer of the Hightower standard, and this she is not. She has only an imperfect technique, appears to lack confidence and unfortunately possesses "sticky fingers". However, it should be remembered that her London performances marked her début with the company.

Igor Youskevitch is a great dancer. An effortless technique, a superb elevation and an impressive dignity are combined with a fine partnering ability. His arm-movements are unapproached by the present generation of male dancers, and his beats and leaps have the brilliance and finish of a great virtuoso.

The versatility of John Kriza may blind one to his qualities, which in a way are almost as remarkable as those of Youskevitch. Although his classical dancing is often marred by flapping hands and over-exhuberance, as a character dancer his artistry can have few equals. Personality, in abundance, is also possessed by Paul Godkin, who was the most interesting of the dancers making their London début. Godkin has an exciting technique (his turns are really remarkable) and a great sense of humour.

The whole company possesses what could almost be a superfluity of talent, were it not for the careful husbandry of its management, which seems determined to ensure that none is wasted. Norma Vance is steadily justifying her early promise and has been outstanding in many roles, Ruth Ann Koesun's charm and effervescent personality is a great asset to the company, while Paula Lloyd is another of the many girls who show talent and promise. Among the men, James Mitchell should settle down to become a very useful member of the company, Eric Braun is excellent in his many roles, Peter Gladke is a fine character dancer.

The repertory and dancers of Ballet Theatre are good, but the company has something in addition. It has a personality of its own, a colour, a vivacity, a spirit that permeates everything it does and everyone it comes into contact with. As a company they have an informal charm, and it is probably this more than anything else that has endeared Ballet Theatre to the London audiences.

BOROVANSKY

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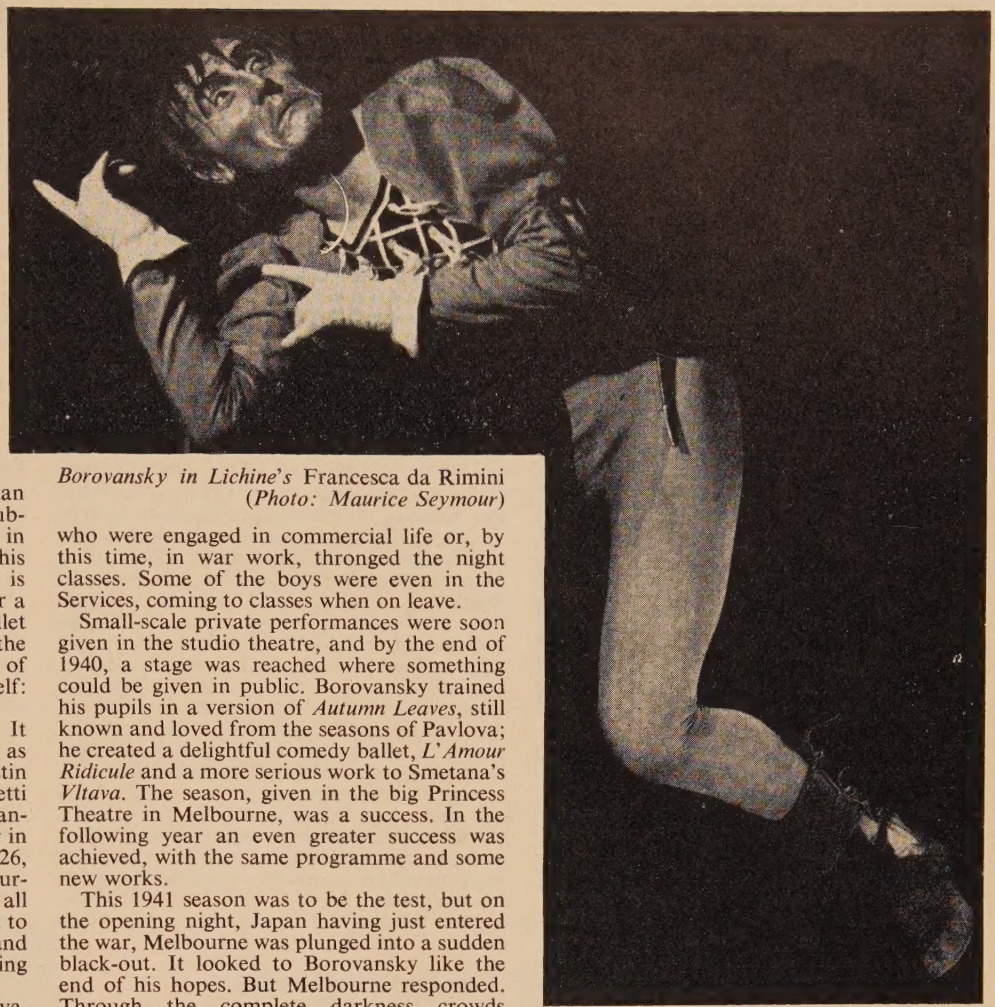
by EVAN SENIOR

Back in Australia after a flying visit to Britain and the Continent is Edouard Borovansky, the man whose name, to millions of Australians, is synonymous with ballet. For it was the Borovansky Australian Ballet which put ballet on the map all over Australia.



Borovansky in Lichine's Francesca da Rimini (*Photo: Maurice Seymour*)

THERE is a legend that, in 1834, a man named Batman landed on the scrub-covered shores of the River Yarra in Victoria and spoke the historic words: "This is the place for a village." That "village" is now the great City of Melbourne. Just over a hundred years later, when the de Basil Ballet came to Australia for the first time, one of the dancers looked around that same city, now of more than a million people, and said to himself: "This is the place for a ballet."

That man was Edouard Borovansky. It was not his first visit to Australia. Trained as a dancer in Czechoslovakia under Augustin Berger, who was a fellow pupil of Cecchetti and a follower of Cecchetti principles, Borovansky had worked for some years as a dancer in the National Theatre in Prague. In 1926, seeking further experience, he joined the touring company of Anna Pavlova, travelling all over the world. On Pavlova's death he went to the company organised by René Blum and George Balanchine, and then to the touring company of Col. de Basil.

Borovanksy had other links with Pavlova. His wife was Xenia Nicolaeva, daughter of the celebrated dancer Alexandra Nicolaeva of the Imperial Ballet.

Xenia Nicolaeva had been trained by her mother with special emphasis on the art of teaching, and when Edouard and Xenia Borovansky landed in Australia in 1938, they looked around and saw that they had the ideal surroundings, and equipment, for founding a ballet.

They left the de Basil company during its Australian tour and settled in Melbourne. There, with the co-operation of the Melbourne Ballet Club, they founded a teaching studio.

Ten years ago there was no permanent ballet in Australia. Different ballet companies had come and gone. In the memories of many, only Pavlova remained. Then, in 1936, came the first of a wave of "Russian" companies, the first led by Leon Woizikowski, continuing into 1939 and 1940 with the full company of de Basil.

Edouard and Xenia Borovansky saw that they would have to begin from bedrock. They wanted to make a ballet, but they knew that the foundation of a ballet was a good school. The material was there, but it needed training.

The Melbourne Ballet Club, with which they associated themselves, collaborated heartily. One of its stalwarts was Mrs. J. M. Helpmann, mother of Robert Helpmann, and the club soon grew to a total of 1,500 members, with its own club premises, studios, and small studio stage for performances.

Edouard and Xenia Borovansky knew what they were aiming at: a professional ballet company. They concentrated on classes. Some pupils came during the day; others, who were engaged in commercial life or, by this time, in war work, thronged the night classes. Some of the boys were even in the Services, coming to classes when on leave.

Small-scale private performances were soon given in the studio theatre, and by the end of 1940, a stage was reached where something could be given in public. Borovansky trained his pupils in a version of *Autumn Leaves*, still known and loved from the seasons of Pavlova; he created a delightful comedy ballet, *L'Amour Ridicule* and a more serious work to Smetana's *Vltava*. The season, given in the big Princess Theatre in Melbourne, was a success. In the following year an even greater success was achieved, with the same programme and some new works.

This 1941 season was to be the test, but on the opening night, Japan having just entered the war, Melbourne was plunged into a sudden black-out. It looked to Borovansky like the end of his hopes. But Melbourne responded. Through the complete darkness crowds thronged the theatre, the season of a fortnight was completely booked out, and at the end of it Borovansky knew that his dream of an Australian Ballet was coming true.

Borovansky, knowing that by now he had the nucleus of a ballet and a strong and disciplined *corps-de-ballet*, joined forces with the largest of the Australian theatrical companies, J. C. Williamson, Ltd., and by 1944 was ready to stage a completely professional ballet season.

By this time he had built up a repertoire. It included full-scale performances of *Les Sylphides*, *Façade*, *Giselle*, the second act of *Lac des Cygnes*, and the company's own works, *Vltava*, Dorothy Stevenson's *Sea Legend*, Borovansky's own *Fantasy on the Grieg Concerto* and *Capriccio Italien*, and a ballet to the Sibelius *En Saga* by Laurel Martyn, who had joined the company after experience in Britain and became, with Dorothy Stevenson, its principal ballerina.

The Williamson backing gave the company large theatres in all the capital cities and in New Zealand, and in spite of the war, the Borovansky Ballet of more than 40 dancers set out in 1944 on what turned out to be a triumphal tour. In every city, theatres were sold out weeks ahead for seasons extending to six and eight weeks at a time.

While the ballet toured, the school in Melbourne continued under the guidance of Xenia Borovansky. Newcomers were added to the resources of the Company. *Schehérazade*, *Le Beau Danube*, *Coppelia* and an all-Australian ballet, *Terra Australis*, rounded out the repertoire. Dancers improved with experience.

At the end of the war, with the return of large-scale musical productions, the Borovansky Ballet provided dancers for most of these presentations, and Borovansky felt that the time had come to sit back and take stock.

Now, ready to begin again, Borovansky has come back to Europe for the first time since 1938, to look and listen, to meet old friends, to take back dancers for his reorganised company. Once more he is backed by the huge resources of the Williamson organisation. The old repertoire is to be revived in part—"Australians like the ballets they know," says Borovansky. "We will give them what they like, and at the same time work in new ballets."

He plans full-scale productions of *Petrouchka*, *La Boutique Fantasque*, *Tricorne* and *Aurora's Wedding*, in addition to other new works. Borovansky has watched ballet tendencies in Britain, in Europe, and has seen all performances of the American companies in London. Back with him to Australia have gone his former dancers Peggy Sager and Paul Hammond, also Kathleen Gorham, who came originally from the Borovansky Ballet and who has been for some time with Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. In Australia Charles Boyd, also formerly of Ballet Rambert, will join him. He hopes to have Dorothy Stevenson with him again, and he is enthusiastic about the promise in several young Australians who are now showing the benefit of Xenia Borovansky's intense training.

Rehearsals, commencing this month, will prepare for the Borovansky Ballet opening in Sydney, at the Empire Theatre, on March 16 next year. It will be the beginning of the new Borovansky Ballet, a permanent ballet for Australia once more.

BALLET BEHIND THE

Two years in Moscow

Ulanova in the first act of Prokofiev's Cinderella. *She is the greatest of all the Soviet ballerinas and is at her best in tragic roles.*

WHEN I first went to Moscow in 1948, I remember that my first impressions were of squalor, dirt and decrepitude. The sombre black clothes, the shoddy tawdry trappings of everyday existence in Moscow converted me, who had never previously taken an interest in ballet, into a ballet fan. And then I discovered that beauty and poetry, inspiration and grace, still exist in the Soviet Union, if only within the walls of its great ballet theatres.

The Bolshoi Theatre itself, the centre of ballet in Moscow, is one of the most beautiful buildings I have ever seen. It's exquisite proportions and slender towering Doric columns make it a fitting scene for the lovely ballets performed there. Internally it is a five-tiered, immense, red plush and crystal-gilt nightmare with all the pomp and circumstance of the Victorian era, which contrasts most strangely with the shabby, ugly audiences which throng the auditorium.

I first went to see *Romeo and Juliet*, to Prokofiev's music, danced by Ulanova. This is a true Soviet ballet by Leonitov, which was produced just before World War II. Ulanova is without any doubt the perfect interpreter, as well as the creator of this role. I have since seen it danced by Chikvaidze, who, while she is technically almost flawless, conveys none of the pure, yet passionate beauty of Ulanova's Juliet. The truth is that I have never yet seen one of Ulanova's tragic roles successfully performed by any other dancer. She is incomparable, she is the spirit of poetic movement and she has made *Romeo and Juliet* live for me as Shakespeare never did. Williams' décor for this ballet is fully in keeping with the drama and majesty of the play. The music is sadly hampered by an appalling trait which also almost destroys parts of the Bolshoi's *Swan Lake*—namely the unwillingness or inability of the conductor (usually Faier) to keep the brass section of the orchestra within bounds.

I first saw *Swan Lake* when Plisetskaya danced it no the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Komsomol. In this version the first three acts are by Gorsky, the last by A. M. Messerer. It was a memorable evening because three of the other dancers either were or are now ballerinas. They are Bogolyubskaya (*The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* and *Swan Lake*), Struchkova (*Cinderella*, *Flame of Paris*, *The Bronze Horseman* and *The Fountain*), and Chorokhova (*Coppelia and Baby Stork*). Plisetskaya is a young brilliant dancer whose technique and virtuosity far surpass those of any other ballerina in the U.S.S.R. Her precision is incredible and yet the beauty of her movements, as she glides off at the end of Act 2, is so astounding as to leave me too moved to applaud—an effect normally produced on me only by Ulanova. As Odile she is superb, scintillating, sensual; as Odette, for all the loveliness of her dancing, her personality is too cold, hard and ruthless for a romantic heroine. Nevertheless, in *Swan Lake*, *Raimonda*, *Don Quixote* and *The Hunchbacked Horse* she has no equal. While the costumes of *Swan Lake* are generally far better than in *Romeo and Juliet*, I prefer the English way of dressing the *corps de ballet* in the romantic costume to the Russian insistence on the tutu. Messerer's happy ending in Act 4 strikes a discordant note, though it gives Kacharov, as the evil spirit, an opportunity for a magnificent death-scene.

I next saw *Raimonda* which has a trite, worthless story and deplorable costumes. It is, however, tremendously enjoyable because of the isolated but exquisite choreographic gems by Lavrovsky, Gorsky and Petysas. These include the classical "grand pas" and other dances of classical beauty and style.

A Soviet Cinderella

Then came *Cinderella* by Zakharov to Prokofiev's music. This is a wonderful three act production which shows to the full the Russian genius for brilliant stage-management. It contains forty-two different scenes and dances and is usually danced by Struchkova. I have seen both Ulanova and Lepeshinskaya in this role, but to my mind neither of these great ballerinas approaches the perfection of Struchkova because they are both too old for the part. Struchkova must be about twenty-two, after Ulanova she is the finest lyrical dancer in Russia, and she brings to *Cinderella* a charming air of injured innocence which is completely convincing.

All the ballets so far discussed are performed at the Bolshoi which has a smaller subsidiary theatre attached to it, the Filial. This theatre has a much smaller stage, but the company is the same, and the standard of stage-management and production is on the same very high level. It has a much more intimate atmosphere than the Bolshoi, and the audiences tend to be fiercely partisan and not always selective in their applause. Here I saw *Mirandolina*, music by Vasilenko, choreography by Vainonen. It is written round Goldoni's comedy of the fair inn-keeper, and superbly danced by Lepeshinskaya. This ballerina possesses outstanding, dazzling virtuosity and technique, but she is also a brilliant actress. Her conquest of the misogynist Ripafratta (danced by Yermolaev) in the second act, is a memorable performance.

Returning to the Bolshoi, in my opinion the finest of all the ballets produced by Soviet Russia is *The Fountain of Bakchisarai*. The programme claims that this is a choreographic poem. It could not be better described. If anyone could do justice to Pushkin's poetry, Zakharov, Asafien and Ulanova have certainly done it. Ulanova dances Maria, the tragic captive of the poem, and to see her is to feel all the emotions of a lifetime. The supreme moment of all the ballets I have ever seen is the crystalline, shattering beauty of her arm and hand outstrecthed against the wall of her room, when, despite the intervention of the Khan, she is stabbed to death by Zarena, the Khan's chief wife, who is distraught with mistaken jealousy. Many people consider that the ballet should end with this act, but I, for one, would never consent to miss the haunting grace of Tikhomirova's dancing as one of the captive women, nor the savage, all-conquering ferocity of Farmanyants as the Khan's lieutenant in the Tartar dance, nor Ulanova's thistledown floating as the tragic, elusive spectre of Maria.

And then *Giselle* Lavrovsky's production, Ulanova dancing with Gabovich as Albert, and—to set the seal on such superb casting—Plisetskaya as Myrtha. These two ballerinas are here perfectly contrasted. Ulanova's lyrical, lilting loveliness against Plisetskaya's cold, imperious, ruthless precision.

Of the ballets performed at the Filial, *Coppelia* is my favourite. This apparently applies to the audiences too for it is performed now more than any other Filial ballet. The dresses of Swanhilda's friends in the first act deserve a chapter to themselves. Designed by Samokavalov, of the most glorious delicate colours, they fully accord with the laughing exuberant gaiety of Delibes' music and of Gorsky's choreography. Recently this ballet has been danced in the main by Chorokhova and she brings to the part a charming natural vivacity which is a delight to watch.

Don Quixote is performed at the Bolshoi. It is not popular with the foreign colony in Moscow, because it is far too long and the story is far too dull, as conceived by Petysas. But for those who love classical dancing, it is absolutely fascinating. Kitry and Dulcinea are danced by Tikhomirnova or Plisetskaya. These two are both superlative virtuoso dancers, and the part requires everything they can bring to it. The ballet has no unity whatever—it leaps from sublime classicism to ridiculous mime and back with a careless rapture that is worthy of a better cause. But it gives Plisetskaya the opportunity to dance and that excuses everything.

Propaganda Ballets

Until June 21st, 1949, all the ballets I had seen at the Bolshoi had been either classical or romantic or both. It had always amazed me that a regime as appallingly materialist, utilitarian and utterly sordid as that of the Soviet Union could reconcile itself with the mysticism, the nobility of thought and action, the sheer beauty for its own sake revealed un the ballet. However, on that ominous day in June the *premiere* of a new ballet was held. It was *The Bronze Horseman* and it heralded a reversion to the abysmal ugliness of propagandist ballet typified by *Flame of Paris*. I agree that propaganda ballets need not be ugly—*Shore of Happiness*, at the Stanislavsky Musical Theatre and *Baby Stork* at The Filial are abundant evidence of that. But the fact remains that when they are propagating dialectrical materialism *The Bronze Horseman* and the revival of *Red Poppy* are as hopeless an artistic failure as *Flame of Paris*. *Bronze Horseman* is a

IRON CURTAIN

by

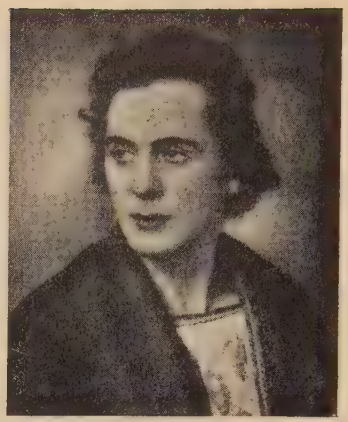
R. Rockingham Gill

concoction of Zakharov's to Gliers music, which is danced divinely by Struchkova. It again is suggested by Pushkin's poem but I fear that Pushkin would turn in his grave if he could see the bathos made of his masterpiece by the propaganda maniacs of the U.S.S.R.

Baby Stork on the other hand, is a charming children's ballet produced at the Filial, which, while amusing children of all ages up to 70, somehow contrives to make an artistic success of it's propaganda story. The music is delightfully written by Klebanov, and Choroknova and Lapauri dance with charm enough to make one want to join the Komsomol—until one remembers the reality outside the theatre.

Crimson Sails at the Filial is outstanding in that it is the only ballet which is not propangandist and yet is a complete, irrevocable and utter artistic failure. It is almost redeemed by Lepeshinskaya's dancing, and if a ballet cannot be redeemed by her it is past praying for. The music by Yurovsky is undistinguished, Williams' costumes are here merely dreadful, yet the story is admirably suited to ballet and deserves a better fate.

The Hunchbacked Horse at the Bolshoi is a delightful contrast. It is from a fairy tale by Yershov, and the choreography, which is most successful was by Gorsky originally revised by Nikitina, Pospekhin and Radunsky. Plisetskaya gives her usual dazzling performamcne of diamond-and -platinum virtuosity as the heroine, while Struchkova with Vasilieva, radiates soft lustre as a Pearl dancing in a seabed scene with the inimitable Farmanyants as Ocean.



K. M. Sergrev as himself and (extreme right) M. M. Gabovich in Romeo and Juliet. *These are two of the principal male dancers of the Bolshoi Theatre.*

I fear that when writing the music of *Flame of Paris*, Asafien was not yet possessed of the inspiration which revealed itself in *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*. Or might it be that the subject (the libretto is by Volkov and Dmitriev about an oppressed, but not repressed, actress with revolutionary tendencies at the court of Louis XVI) was not so inspiring. In any case the only inspired music in the ballet comes when the whole company suddenly bursts into song and the Marseillaise. One feels that if the choreographer (Vainonen) and composer lack invention to that extent, Struchkova as Jeanne and the technically excellent Tikhomirnova as the actress are wasting their time.

And so we come to *Red Poppy* which has been more aptly named *Red Poppycock* by an American friend of mine. First produced in 1927 its revival in 1949 was awarded a Stalin prize. One wonders why, Can it be because like the Soviet Government, this ballet changes its enemy with the years ? In 1927 it was about British oppression of the down-trodden Chinese worker, but here it pops up in 1949 about American Imperialist aggressors ! In order to drag something of an artistic or balletic nature into the story, the libretto (by Kurilko) has to resort to the good old dream. One of the King's Messengers summed it up perfectly by saying: " This is good musical comedy but it isn't ballet " !

In the space of a brief review it is impossible to cover many aspects of Soviet ballet, but I hope I have said enough to convince ballet-fans that the Sadler's Wells company has some very talented rivals behind the iron curtain. If the day ever comes when Ulanova, Plisetskaya or Struchkova are allowed by their government to visit this country, I shall be the first in the queue to see them.

Below. Two studies of Sergrev in different roles

Struchkova in the Ballroom scene of Cinderella. *She is said to be even better than Ulanova in this particular role. Aged about twenty-two she is one of the most lyrical dancers in Russia and the possible successor to Ulanova, when such a person has to be found.*

Something Old, Something New, in Edinburgh

by Jay Price

Rosella Hightower, prima ballerina of the de Cuevas Company, who has just choreographed a new work on the Salomé theme which will be first given during the October Paris season.
(*Photo : Jean Robier*)

PERHAPS the only branch of the Edinburgh Festival of Music and Drama in which Britain was not represented was that of the dance, or more accurately the ballet; for there were numerous exhibitions of Scottish dancing sprinkled throughout. The presence of the Sadler's Wells Ballet at the Festival would have undoubtedly added to the international flavour of the ballet companies appearing there; for although, on the surface, the variety was to consist of American, French and Spanish artists, the de Cuevas company in the three years of its existence has acquired a plurality of American dancers making the exhibition predominantly American. This is not a criticism, merely an observation.

I shall not linger on the programme presented by the American National Ballet Theatre (*Theme and Variations*, *Fall River Legend* and *Fancy Free*) as London has since had the opportunity of seeing it at Covent Garden and it will be reviewed elsewhere in these pages. It should be pointed out however that faulty lighting and poor orchestral accompaniment were responsible for a less satisfying presentation than had been expected. Apparently these defaults were minor in the face of the excellence of the works presented as was evidenced by vehement outbursts of approval from the spectators.

When the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas took over the Empire Theatre on the following Monday, August 28th the air of the theatre was still heavily tinged with Nora Kaye's poignant characterization of Lizzie Bordon in *Fall River Legend* and strains of Leonard Bernstein's syncopated score for Robbin's *Fancy Free*. The atmosphere then became charged with a Russian-French-American sobriety that leaned heavily on the classics. The opening ballet, *Swan Lake* (Act II), a version which Britons from London to Manchester have seen when the company was here in 1948 and 1949, was distinguished mainly for the excellent dancing of Rosella Hightower in the title role and an electric performance by Serge Golovine of the variation for Prince Zeigfried, danced at a Wednesday matinée. Miss Hightower it appears has discarded her customary reliance on brilliant technique and is acquiring a style, that may possibly be termed " more Russian ", notably more suitable for the interpretation of the role of the Swan Queen. There is an acquired expressiveness in the upper part of her body (chest and back) that one previously missed and a rounded firmness in her legs that give her the recognized appearance of a ballerina of the Russian school.

New Work

Probably the most significant item presented during the first half of the week was a first ballet by George Skibine entitled *Tragédie à Verone*. The music is by Tchaikowsky and is the same used by Lifar for his *Romeo and Juliet ;* the décor and costumes are by André Delfau. The principal roles were danced by George Skibine (Romeo), Ethery Pagava (Juliet) and Raoul Celada and Serge Golovine as Montagues.

Granted that a synopsis of Shakespeare's beautiful tragedy is acceptable, Skibine's version is more credible than Lifar's. For in the brief space of time allotted by the Tchaikowsky score, the poignant incidents, the axis upon which the story revolves, are in each instant more discernible. For one thing the Capulets are at least distinguishable from the Montagues and a feeling of enmity is established early in the piece, as it should be; something one never sensed in the Lifar version.

The fact that both choreographers used the same score, however, makes comparison inevitable. Whereas Lifar relied heavily upon the clichés in the score as a springboard for his choreographic patterns, generally producing an effect of exaggerated pathos, Skibine's tendency to underplay has resulted in a more harmonious effect.

A feeling of period and mood, lacking in the Lifar version, was established in the first scene by Delfau's novel décor. Rows of transparent panels, each about three feet wide, and resembling stone walls of a castle, covered the length and breadth of the stage, providing mysterious little passageways from which the dancers emerged. For Scene II the panels are raised revealing a somewhat austere, architecturally designed Capulet home. It is a three dimensional set occupying a small space upstage centre. There are two real staircases leading up to a balcony, below which are two spring doors that eventually open, disclosing the prostrate form of Juliet, looking very much like a cadaver on a morgue slab. The resulting macabre effect is unpleasantly realistic. Apart from that the production was in good taste, a quality not often evident in the de Cuevas repertoire.

The ballet was well danced by the Company and some notably exciting moments were provided by Serge Golovine whose brittle technique and astounding elevation were like recurrent electric shocks throughout the ballet.

The second item of interest was the revival of *Petrouchka*. A considerably better production than the one given by the Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo in Vichy in 1947 it was restaged by the company's mâitre de ballet John Taras assisted by Nicholas Orloff. Leonide Massine danced the title role, Majorie Tallchief was the Ballerina and Raoul Celada the Blackamoor. The success of this revival was supported by a plausible rendering of the Stravinsky score.

On Thursday night, August 31st, the audience was treated to a bit of unscheduled dancing. To offset the delay caused by Massine's late arrival for his appearance in *Petrouchka*, Marjorie Tallchief and George Skibine danced the pas de deux from *Don Quixote*. Miss Tallchief's dancing was exhilarating and was evidence of the marked improvement she has made since her arrival in Europe three years ago. She was nobly partnered by her husband George Skibine.

Other ballets given during the week, already familiar to the British public, were *Giselle*,

Serge Golovine, who has had a great success with the de Cuevas Company. He was previously at the Paris Opera.
(*Photo : Palau*)

Beau Danube and *Black Swan grand pas de deux* from Act III of *Swan Lake*.

Visitors from Spain

The retreating gala mood set by the elaborate décor and diversified repertoire of the American National Ballet Theatre had finally resolved itself, through a slightly more sober display by the de Cuevas company, into a bare stage sporting a black velvet back curtain and musical accompaniment of two pianos and a guitar. On Monday, September 4th, when Rosario and Antonio appeared for the first time on any English stage, there were no sounds of scratchy violins tuning up, no tap-tap of the conductors baton issuing forth from the orchestra pit; an abnormal, apprehensive calm seemed to have settled over the packed auditorium. There were no doubts, however, in the minds of the handfull of spectators who had seen these young Spanish dancers before that the tomblike silence would soon be shattered like breaking glass, by the stunning sound of Antonio's heel beats and the birdlike clattering of Rosario's castanets—but how could the unititiates know ?

The programme varied from a melancholy dance inspired by the *Posthumous Poems* of Garcia Lorca to the lively, popular Jota, *Viva Navarra* to the music of Larregia and the torrid *Baile Flamenco*, a traditional Flamenco dance.

But without doubt, the pitch of excitement was reached that evening when Antonio danced the *Zapateado* to the music of Sarasate. Those who had never seen the Zapateado danced before, as well as the connoiseurs in the audience, were impressed by his display of virtuosity.

The two dancers were smartly costumed throughout, making adequate compensation for the almost complete absence of décor.

Rosario and Antonio at the Edinburgh Festival (Photo : Keystone)

Oh, Those Poor Dancers!

by Bryan Matheson

Many people still have the impression that a dancer's life is all champagne and diamonds. Unfortunately this is very rarely true and most dancers have to put up with impertinence from the fans who, in the past, would have loaded them with rich gifts.

THERE ought to be a society formed for the prevention of cruelty to dancers. Especially ballet dancers. Our four-footed friends have some protection, why not the five positioned ones. Of course, in certain cases one can think of, the audience should be protected not the dancers. All the same, do all balletgoers really know what's going on? I am sure some of them sit through the whole of *Giselle* waiting for the swan to come on.

For a ballet dancer life is one long *plié*. For it isn't the tough classes, the interminable rehearsals, the innumerable performances that I find cruel. The dancers are most ill-treated by their "fans" and sycophants, who, in the words of the popular song, are "all over the place".

Backstage with the Russian Ballet was bad enough, with the dancers' mothers for ever somewhere—in the corridors, in the practice rooms, on the stage, or grouped around the Call Board like relatives at the reading of a Will. No director was safe from them. They would fight to the last *fouetté*. Not for their daughters' honour (that was a minor matter). They were occupied with matters of greater import such as dressing-rooms, billing (the non-cooing kind) and who plays which part in what. They did, however, have some reason for their existence. Even if it was sometimes difficult to discover it. Whereas most of those who haunt the back stage staircases of Covent Garden are as mysterious as the Sphinx—but not nearly so silent! They batten on the tired dancers like horse flies, and their pseudo knowledgeable chatter only increases the mystery.

"Out front" it is just as bad. See them assembling before the curtain rises, and chattering through the overture (their bad-mannered competition with one overture once caused Constant Lambert to turn his back on their plaudits at the end of it). "Margot," "Bobby" and "Harold" are bandied back and forth like ping-pong balls. It does not matter that they only have a nodding acquaintance with these dancers—with the nodding mostly on their side. To them the world of Ballet is one great jolly succession of Christian names.

Sometimes, in the foyer, one espies Mr. Arnold Haskell, or Mr. Cyril Beaumont, like islands of quiet sanity in an ocean of ineptitude. After a covert glance, the owners of the more penetrating voices, hitherto used to extravagantly extol or condemn certain dancers, become more subdued. But as soon as these authorities move on, like yokels riding a racehorse, the others noisily remount their most ill-constructed hobbyhorses.

Their lack of consideration is only equalled by their impertinence. Dancers who have spent the best part of their lives working and studying to improve themselves as artists, are airily dismissed in a few contemptuous phrases. They imagine that, because they "simply adore" Ballet, they are qualified to criticise it, and no dancer is safe from their painful platitudes.

Give me a music-hall audience any time. It may not be very subtle, but it has a certain shrewdness as to talent. I am as ardent an admirer of Ballet and its interpreters as I am an opponent of many of its followers. Of course, there are exceptions. People who have a normal, enthusiastic liking for a fascinating art. They are, however, so often outflanked by the shrill posturings of a very vocal minority, who encourage the outsider's belief that this vital and virile art is merely Precious. And the people who suffer most are the dancers themselves, hard-working men and women with unequalled devotion to their work (and in most cases possessed of an astringent sense of humour). That is why I say, "Oh, Those Poor Dancers!" For they are the ones who ultimately suffer from the hysterical devotees and the abortive hangers-on.

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New Ballets

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

First given by Ballet Rambert at Bath, on Thursday, August 31, 1950. Music by Cæsar Franck, orchestrated by Geoffrey Corbett. Choreography by David Paltenghi, Decor and Costumes by Roger Furse.

CAST

Madeline . . . Margaret Hill
Porphyro . . . David Paltenghi
Beldame . . . Margaret Pollen
Beadsman . . . Ronald Hind
Baron . . . . Derek Rosen
His Wife . . . Angela Sparshott
Knights: Cecil Bates, Ronald Hynd, Derek Westlake, Norman Dixon.
Ladies: Mary Munro, Sylvia Briar, Mavis Traill, Audrey Brooks, Pearl Gaden, Anne Horn, Josephine Spaull, Shirley Rees.

. . . upon St. Agnes' Eve
Young virgins might have visions of delight

If ceremonies due they did aright;
As, supperless to bed they must retire.

Nor look behind, nor sideways

Madeline, obedient to these rites, obtains a vision of her lover, Porphyro, who alas, is an enemy of her family. Suddenly he appears before her in reality having persuaded the Beldame to lead him through the castle to her bedroom. Madeline does not resist his passion and they make their escape after the guests at the banquet are overpowered by the revelry.

Above, The Knights and Ladies are overcome by the revelry. The ballet closely follows Keats' poem, which was also the subject of a television dance drama by Celia Franca, early in the year.

Below, Madeline (Margaret Hill) receives the homage of the Knights of the Court. London will first have a chance to see this ballet when Ballet Rambert have a season at the Kings Theatre, Hammersmith, starting on October 16.

(Photos : Edith Tudor)

TRUMPET CONCERTO

David Poole and Elaine Fifield

David Blair and Svetlana Beriosova

First given in London by Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet at the Sadler's Wells Theatre on Tuesday, September 19, 1950. Music by Haydn. Choreography by George Balanchine, Decor and Costumes by Vivienne Kernot.

CAST

Svetlana Beriosova	David Poole	David Blair
Elaine Fifield	Pirmin Trecu	Maryon Lane

Shirley Bishop, Maureen Bruce, Joan Cadzow, Stella Claire, Stella Farrance, Kathleen Gorham, Sheilah O'Reilly, Veronica Vail.

Below, the full cast with Beriosova and Blair centre (in white). Fifield and Poole, left centre. Lane and Trecu, right centre. (Photos. Roger Wood)

Curtain Up!

The American journal which referred to ALICIA MARKOVA as an " inhabitant of the air " was more correct than it could ever have imagined. Recently Madame Markova kept on getting stuck in the lift in the block of flats which is her London home. She found she either got stranded between two floors, or sometimes it would never move at all and she had to walk down four floors. After she had complained many times it was discovered that the real trouble was that the great ballerina was not heavy enough to weigh down the floor of the lift which makes the contact that causes the lift to move. The Hall Porter suggested that she should either carry around some heavy weights, or jump up and down several times when she gets into the lift.

Air comes into another story about Madame Markova. During her recent visit to Monte Carlo to recuperate after her operation, she was talking to an Englishman who lived in the country. They were talking about travel, and Markova was saying how she flew to so many countries. After they had been talking for some while and had discussed the various countries that they both knew, the man suddenly said " Excuse me asking, but are you an Air Hostess ? "

★

There are many advantages in being small. The great Mexican-born Spanish dancer, LUISILLO, was in England recently for a television programme and wanted to buy a suit in a hurry as he only had forty-eight hours in the country. He tried many shops in the West End but everywhere he was sent to the boy's department and even then the suits for school boys were far too big for him. In the end he came to the conclusion that the English were a race of giants and gave the whole thing up.

Readers will be glad to know that there is every chance of Teresa and Luisillo coming to London with their new company at the beginning of November. It will be remembered that they scored a great hit when they appeared at Princes Theatre, two years ago, with Carmen Amaya's company. Their present company is said to include one of the best *corps de ballet* to leave Spain. One of the dancers comes from the Royal line of gypsies.

Alicia Markova with her niece, Susie. Susie is famous for her remarks which have frequently been quoted in these columns, she now goes to class at the Cone-Ripman School where she is already showing remarkable talent. Madame Markova, now completely recovered from her operation, has already returned to Festival Ballet when it was in Edinburgh and Glasgow. On the first night of the season at the Stoll Theatre, on October 24, she will dance in the full Nutcracker, *which has not been seen in England for many years*
(*Photo : Eric Coop*)

Broken English can frequently lead to slight misunderstandings. NATALIE KRASSOVSKA during a *tempi* rehearsal with Festival Ballet's conductor, Hubert Foster Clark, came down stage and said to the conductor " We must get the *tempo* right otherwise on the stage there will be dirty works ".

" Dirty works " repeated Foster Clark in typical British horror.

" Not on my stage there won't," said Stage Director Benn Toff.

★

After the first performance of *Trumpet Concerto* at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, each of the dancers was presented with a medal by GEORGE BALANCHINE as a momento of the occasion. The medals were made by the great choreographer himself out of cardboard, silver tinfoil, red ribbon, and a picture cut from the cover of book-matches. It was a really charming gesture and really appreciated by the dancers. We cannot imagine some choreographers we can think of, going to so much trouble for the artists who so faithfully interpret their works.

★

Never before in the history of ballet can one company have given two versions of *Giselle* in the same season. But the Marquis de Cuevas Grand Ballet, who are always guaranteed to spring a surprise on us, are doing just that. During the Paris season they are giving the classical version for ROSELLA HIGHTOWER and GEORGE SKIBINE, and another with choreography by JEAN BABILEE with designs by the surrealist painter, Labisse.

★

During the recent season of American National Ballet Theatre, there were two ballets in which bodies were liberally strewn about. The first, *Billy the Kid*, in which William Bonney shoots a succession of people in revenge for his mother's death ; the second, *Fall River Legend*, in which that violent Miss Bordon rather clumsily disposes of her parents with an axe. One member of the audience was so overcome by it all that he rushed gibbering to the bar :— " Can I have an, 'er, blood and soda quick," said this timid between chattering teeth.

★

See the English ballet critics
Taking up their usual stand.
Proving though their writing's sticky
That their bar work's simply grand.

★

Leigh Ashton thinks *Giselle* a bore.
How sound a thesis !
Museums are the only places for—
Museum pieces.

Famous Dancers' Recipes : 1

George Skibine on how to make *Soupe a l'oignon* (onion soup).

Physical workers always enjoy eating. Steak houses for football players and boxing champions are famous in New York. In Paris if you want to eat well and cheaply one has to go to the small bistros frequented by stevedores or butchers of the slaughterhouses near La Halle aux Vins or aux Abattoirs. What then do dancers eat? Here is my recipe for one of my favourite dishes, *Soupe a l'oignon* :—

Take two large onions, slice them finely and fry in butter. When they are golden brown add a little bit of chopped garlic, mix thoroughly and then pour in a generous glass of white wine, preferably Burgundy. Let simmer for a few minutes. Add two large cups of meat stock (bouillon), spice to your taste and cook for twenty minutes. After it has sufficiently cooked pour the soup into a "marmite" (earthenware pot), cover with thin crisp toast and sprinkle generously with grated cheese (I prefer Swiss Gruyere). Put the dish into a hot oven and serve when the cheese is melted and golden brown.

At an Edinburgh Festival dinner. Frau and Professor Ebert, Ian Hunter, Marie Rambert, Oliver Messel, and Hugh Hunt

STRAVINSKY AND PETROUCHKA

THE MUSIC——

From every possible point of view, one of the most interesting occurrences in ballet in Britain is the return to the repertoire of *Petrouchka*, which London will see for the first time for many years in the season of the Markova-Dolin company.

PETROUCHKA has been, of course, something of a legend among ballet enthusiasts for a long time. Those who have seen it generally talk a great deal of rubbish about it; and those who were born too late, or who came to ballet too late, have created in their minds far too many fantasies about it.

From the musical point of view, *Petrouchka* holds more interest than any other of Stravinsky's earlier works. I know that this will sound like heresy to those who have become hypnotised by the glitter of *Firebird* and the drumming insistencies of *The Rite of Spring*. But the fact remains that *Petrouchka*, as a musical score, represented a far greater break with musical tradition than either of the other two scores, the first of which was in an earlier tradition and the second was in a sense a logical development of the composer from the basic root of the *Petrouchka* music.

And the fact also remains that *Petrouchka* has maintained its position, purely as music, to an even greater extent than either of the two other scores.

The important thing about *Petrouchka*, as music, was that when it first appeared it taught people to listen differently. If this music had not come when it did, a great many people would be incapable of listening correctly to much of today's music.

This is not easy to explain without having to go into a great deal of technical explanation, which I don't want to do. But what this music did was to broaden the scope of listening. The whole tendency of music had been to collect itself, so to speak, in masses of harmony—in great wads of sounds heard as one, in much the same way as the organist in church plays the accompaniment to a hymn with rich and satisfying chords.

What Stravinsky did in *Petrouchka* was to break up this harmony in such a way that the ears heard, not only one fully harmonised sound at a time, but half a dozen different things at once, harmonically balanced, but separated. Other composers, long before, had done much the same thing, but not in music that appealed in such a way to a wide public.

But although one can listen to *Petrouchka* and appreciate it as music alone, it was—and is—music for ballet, particularly written as such. And the ballet helped—and can still help—in the fuller appreciation of it. The many strands of music in *Petrouchka* correspond to the many strands of movement on the stage. And because the average eye can follow many simultaneous movements much easier than the average ear can follow many simultaneous sounds, so the ballet of *Petrouchka*, with its many movements, helped the ear to follow what at the time were new paths in music. Ballet *can* help in the understanding and appreciation of music: we saw that in Balanchine's remarkable choreography to the Mozart *Symphonie Concertante*, for choreography of this type is music for the eye just as the score is music for the ear.

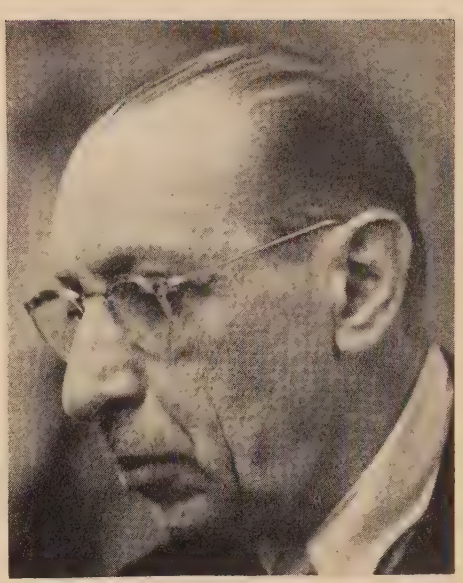
Seven months ago I wrote in DANCE AND DANCERS of *Petrouchka* as the perfect ballet, the creation of musician and choreographer working almost as if with one mind, and of the history of the work and its growth from a single musical idea.

At the moment I do not know which score is to be used in the new production. Recently Stravinsky re-scored the music, although by no means as drastically as he has done in the case of the *Firebird* score used by the New York City Ballet in London. In the majority of cases the difference is not immediately apparent to the untrained ear, but the result is greater clarity and more definite rhythmic quality.

——AND THE MAN

Igor Stravinsky, once known as "the bad boy of European music" and—such is the change in public taste and appreciation—today regarded as one of the classicists of our time, was born in Russia, near Leningrad, in 1882. It was known in those days as St. Petersburg, and his father was a singer in the Opera.

Although he came from a musical home, Stravinsky had no early intentions of following music as a career. Perhaps his father had had enough experience of its ups and downs to consider it as a career for his son. At any rate, the young Stravinsky was destined for the law, and he had almost completed his legal training when, at the age of 20, he happened to be travelling in Germany and came into contact with the celebrated Russian composer, Rimsky-Korsakoff, the musician who was considered a master of the art of colourful orchestration, and who himself was an ardent devotee of ballet and a composer for it.



IGOR STRAVINSKY

This meeting turned Igor Stravinsky towards music, and he began his studies under Rimsky-Korsakoff, who taught him mastery of orchestral brilliance and colour. However, the young musician remained unknown, and it was not until Diaghileff commissioned him to write the music for *Firebird* that his name became known immediately almost all over the world. In fact, it was Diaghileff, with his uncanny sense of judgment, who was responsible for Stravinsky's introduction to the wider world of music, and who, even before a note of his ballet music had been heard in public, pointed him out one day to Tamara Karsavina as one who "would be famous over-night." *Firebird* was Stravinsky's introduction to the theatre and to ballet, and Europe's introduction to a new and vital composer.

After that first Russian Ballet tour in 1910 Stravinsky did not return to his homeland. In Paris he found his natural surroundings and there he settled. In this earlier period his work had a colourful Russian quality, blazing with garish colours and rhythms. Early in the 1920's, however, he began to write music which represented a distinct break with his earlier style, and turned to a classical form and content. It was not a break in musical thought, however, for although the outward style was different, the content was a development of the same musical thought.

Stravinsky has written much ballet music, an opera and an oratorio, chamber music, symphonies and a violin concerto, as well as choral music.

Today he lives in America, high on a hill outside Hollywood. However, he has no contact with the surrounding film colony, spending most of his time working under ideal conditions, and only leaving his pleasant home for his many journeys to other American cities to conduct or to direct performances of his own work.

The fuss and controversy over *The Rite of Spring* has been forgotten, the blazing brocades of *Firebird* and *Petrouchka* are accepted as normal, and the "bad boy" who was once put in the corner and soundly spanked has been promoted to head prefect.

Anthony Burke as the Moor, Natalie Krassovska as the Ballerina, and Nicholas Beriosoff as Petrouchka, in the first scene of Festival Ballet's Petrouchka. *(Photo : Denis de Marney)*

Dancers you should know . . . . .

MARYON LANE

If " line " is the relationship of the various parts of the body (i.e., arms, legs, torso and head) to space, then Maryon Lane is " line "; for geometry tells us that things equal to the same thing are equal to each other. Whether in arabesque or standing in second position the segments of her body conspire towards the creation of perfect geometric figures, always delightful to look at. That it is a natural attribute, and not acquired, makes it none-the-less attractive. That few dancers possess it is an unavoidable tragedy.

Miss Lane is a Sadler's Wells Theatre dancer by way of Zululand. She descended upon the Wells school in the autumn of 1946 and has since risen to the position of a principal dancer in the junior company. Certainly not much more than five feet tall, she has mohagany coloured hair and enquiring brown eyes that belong to a scientist rather than a ballet dancer. Her expression on stage as well as off, frequently reminds one of Nina Stroganova, one time ballerina of the de Basil Original Ballets Russes.

Through careful training and certainly the result of an inate sensitivity she has developed a pair of the lovliest hands and arms to be seen hereabouts. Her technique is well controlled rather than brilliant, and is typical of the school of her origin. Her style shadows that of Margot Fonteyn, whom she idolizes, with traces of individuality already asserting themselves in the way she inclines her head and the aura of mysticism which hovers over her expression when interpreting a role.

When she was three she attended the Pauline Stokes School in Johannesburg, initially to accompany her elder sister June upon whom the family stakes were laid. They had at their disposal a diversified course of dance training which included ballet, Greek and tap dancing. Whereas June found the demands of terpsichorean art too rigorous and abandoned it after three years, Maryon's appetite was merely whetted by it. At thirteen she applied herself to the Cechetti method as taught by Faith de Villiers and at the end of two years contemplated a trip to London. In addition to the numerous medals and trophies she had acquired from various competitions, the award of a scholarship in 1946, which she had to split with Gilbert Vernon (Sadler's Wells Ballet) enabled her to come to this city.

Her talent was indisputable, for after a year of study at the Sadler's Wells School, Ninette de Valois installed her as a member of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. There was great rejoicing at home. for neither Miss Lane nor her family had expected such early recognition. She was, of course, put into the *corps de ballet*; but in addition given understudies of the Polka in *Facade*, Columbine in *Carnaval*, and the Pas de Trois from *Swan Lake*; roles which eventually became hers.

A momentous occasion for her was during the London season in January, 1948, when she was given the Mazurka to dance in *Les Sylphides*, a role she had aspired to since she was seventeen. In the summer of 1948 when the company toured Ireland, the *Pas de Deux* from *Giselle* was added to an enlarging repertoire of roles. By the autumn of 1949 she was dancing the White Lady in *Khadra*, the *Bluebird Pas de Deux* and the Wife in Cranko's ballet *Sea Change*, a role which she infinitely enjoyed in contrast to the classical roles she'd been dancing and because of the scope it offered for characterization. Her latest acquisition during the company's spring season this year was the Sugar Plum Fairy in *Casse Noisette* (*Act II*).

Although her name has been romantically linked with that of David Blair, promising young soloist in the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, Miss Lane deplores the thought of matrimony at such an early stage in her career. Having just returned from a provincial tour one of the thoughts uppermost in her mind is a visit to her native South Africa whose pleasant climate and genial people she has missed.

New Books

The Father of Modern Ballet, The Chevalier Noverre. A biography by Deryck Lynham (Sylvan Press, 21*s*.).

Apart from the fact that he wrote some remarkable letters on the dance, not a great deal is know about Le Chevalier Noverre in this country.

(These letters, which explain the sweeping changes that Noverre had to make to turn dancing from a Court entertainment into ballet as we know it, have been translated by Cyril Beaumont but are now, unfortunately, out of print.)

Mr. Lynham has gone to enormous trouble to get the facts right about Noverre's life and although the book is little more than a lot of quotations from various sources strung together, it makes fascinating reading. To English readers the chapter about Noverre's appearances in London, where he was brought by David Garrick, is particularly interesting. As well as a detailed account of his life there is also a most useful description of some of his ballets together with the *scenarii* and a list of his works.

Noverre can truly be called the Father of Ballet as he released the dancer from many conventions and turned ballet into a form that remained for many years until it got caught up in the bog of the Romantic era. It was from this bog that Diaghilev, Fokine, and Isadora Duncan, again released the dancers of this century.

Anyone who is interested in the evolution of ballet can hardly afford not to read Mr. Lynham's book which is only marred by one fault—footnotes, which at any time are tiresome, are in this case at the end of the book. This means that the reader has to scuffle continually backwards and forwards with the result that a good deal of the continuity is lost. All royalties are given to the Sadler's Wells Benovolent Fund.

P.W.

Light On A System Of Classical Dance by John Gregory (published at 2*s*. 6*d*. by the Federation of Russian Classical Ballet, 27, Baker Street, London, W.1.

(To be reviewed in full in our next issue.)

Ballet for Film and Television, by A. H. Franks (Pitman, 12s. 6d.).

In less than one hundred pages, Mr. Franks who wrote *Approach to the Ballet* and is assistant editor of the *Dancing Times*, optimistically explores the future of ballet in films and television. Pros and cons are outlined clearly and concisely, and whether or not you agree with him, he at least succeeds in stimulating your interest in the subject.

Readers whose appetites have been whetted by the discussion in this book will find the appendix helpful in pursuing the subject further; it includes a bibliography of ballet in films and television, where special articles may be found on these subjects, a list of ballet clubs and a catalogue of dance and ballet films.

Handbooks of European National Dances (*Denmark, France, Hungary and Spain*), Max Parrish & Co., 3s. 6d.

Further additions to a series of booklets about European folk dancing that appeared in January of this year. Modestly priced, they are intended to appease your curiosity about folk dancing beyond the British border.

J.P.

Television

Brunelleschi viewing

Elsa Brunelleschi, the famous teacher of Spanish dancing, is now the permanent television critic for DANCE AND DANCERS. Each month she will review the dancing that is seen through a medium that is becoming increasingly important to the dance.

TERESA and LUISILLO. September 13.

MANY people must have missed Teresa and Luisillo's appearance from the Radio Exhibition at Castle Bromwich. Owing to a printers' strike the *Radio Times*, which would have announced their names, did not appear. Reception was unfortunately not too good, due possibly to the set on which I was viewing—but Luisillo's legs had an unfortunate way of parting from his body and pictures were often distorted. This did not prevent one from admiring Luisillo's very individual ethereal style of Spanish dancing, his feline grace, his arrow-swift *tour en l'air* and his brilliant *pirouettes*. With Teresa he danced two numbers *Andalusia* and *Solea*, both very lovely but I was sorry not to see *El Relicario* the best dance in their repertoire. No one who saw Teresa and Luisillo when they danced with Carmen Amaya's company can have forgotten them. They now have their own company which includes the veteran gipsy Felipe Vargas Heredia, Kethy Clevjo a fifteen year old Baibaora, and a brilliant guitarist, Angel Iglesias.

There is a possibility, which should please their countless admirers, of their appearing shortly at a London theatre.

BRITISH DANCE THEATRE. September 18.

This young experimental company which trains at the Art of Movement School in Manchester, presented it's first programme on Television, claiming that it has something new to offer in the realm of dancing.

Their first number opened with a back view of two athletic young men doing stretching exercises in the much favoured second wide position. This was quite well done, but the moment they moved and did a few elementary *deboulés*, they gave the game away. We then saw three kneeling girls, also back view, who wriggled their arms in unison, which amounted to nothing. Only when they began to move freely did we see that they were quite charming, but no better than children dancing—the young men spent all their time either lunging or stretching in their favourite *seconde*.

Number two item. Very nineteen thirtyish Central European Be-Bop of a drunken boy and girl to a wailing saxophone.

Third item. Three young people attempting in their own individual ways to solve the future. I did not see much difference in their movements. There was the same characteristic extremely turned out and tortured crawl, the same slow motion flexing in seconde, the robot-like movements and the pained look. One young man could leap, so we saw lots of that. In the end one of the three young people dies, one goes off to freedom and one remains, presumably stunned by it all.

Fourth item. After stark realism, pink ribbon and lavender romance in muslin. An old lady remembers and relives her past youth. Very boring.

Why should these dancers adopt the extreme turning out of ballet which was not created for beauty but to facilitate technical prowess. . . .

The trouble is not with the dancers themselves who are young and charming, but with the limitations of the system which claims a lot for itself and achieves in effect, so little. Excellent production by Christian Simpson and beautiful choice pieces of Bach, Beethoven and Khachaturyan, played by Eric Robinson's orchestra.

CLOTILDE and ALEXANDRE SACHAROFF. September 21.

Even on the flat black and white of television, one could appreciate the elegance of the costumes of these famous dancers. Their dances are simple little vignettes, presented with good taste.

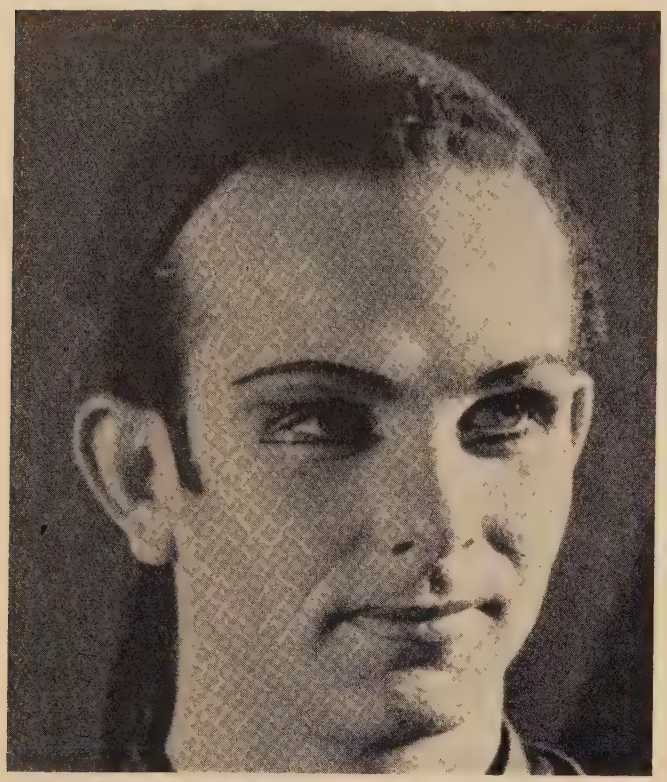
Vision of the 15th century, with its gestures of despair and humility, was a sensitive study of mysticism and Alexandre Sacharoff's best number. His hands and feet which are nearly always bare are supple and interesting to watch.

I was a bit confused about the stylised Egyptian, or were they meant to be Greek, gestures of Clotilde's *Danseuse de Delphs*.

Homage a Boticelli was not too well shot. In a duet one saw, most of the time, only one of the partners.

Luisillo dancing before his company which will be seen in London shortly (*Photo : George Henri*)

DANCERS OF BALLET RAMBERT



CECIL BATES *(Photo: Churton Fairman)*

MARGARET HILL *(Photo: Churton Fairman)*

MARY MUNRO *(Photo: Churton Fairman)*

DAVID PALTENGHI *(Photo: Wesner)*

Dance and Dancers . . . . AT HOME

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET opened their winter season before an audience that read like a ballet-lovers Debrett. An audience that was surprised to find itself confronted by many changes wrought in the auditorium of the ugly but revered old theatre. The proscenium is now chalk white with gold motifs, the rest of the house pale grey and white. The relief-frieze above the stage is picked out in wedgewood blue, the curtain is red and the white safety curtain got a round of applause. It is all so glaring and clinical that it is possible to read your programme (which has also taken on a virgin purity) when the house lights are down. Everything very respectable and in the best Municipal taste, while a good deal of the informal family party atmosphere has vanished under the new paint.

Apart from welcoming back the company whom we were all glad to see, the audience (which included almost the entire New York City Ballet) was gathered together to see the first London performance of George Balanchine's *Trumpet Concerto*.

When ballet is a plastic realisation of music, it is unfortunate if you do not care for the music in question. I am allergic to trumpets. Impressive they are in martial fanfare or Mr. Purcell's Voluntary (I refuse to acknowledge that upstart Jeremiah Clarke) but they never seem to blend with other instruments not even other trumpets; of course the faintest watery "peep" from celestial trumpets will be welcome should I ever find myself in the unlikely position of approach to the pearly gates. There seem to be few merits in Haydn's concerto for that instrument except that it gives those who have made trumpet-playing their life's work, a chance to show what they can do and earn a little extra money at the same time. If such an instrument is to accompany dancers it must be faultlessly played. Several times during the first performance of this ballet a shudder went through the audience. So for me, Balanchine's new work started off with a serious handicap and I was eternally grateful that we were not treated to a long variation to a trumpet *cadenza*.

Choreographically it is a light and not specially important work which would make a splendid finale to a stage show in a super cinema. The three movements have little variation. Full of Balanchine *cliches*, a good deal of marching on point, strutting, arm-swinging, and saluting which somehow fail to combine happily with classicism. There was one movement in which the *corps de ballet* go down on the floor in a position, based on the one that the ballerina takes in the second act of *Swan Lake* before the *adagio*, that is amusing when performed once; but repeated many times it merely becomes a bore. Orally a phrase of music repeated many times can be interesting and create a certain effect; when this same phrase is repeated visually it becomes monotonous.

I could not feel that this was the right work to show Svetlana Beriosova to London for the first time. Though she danced well she is too lyrical for this *vivandière* (or camp follower) type of role which would have suited Fifield better. The three boys—Poole, Blair, and Trecu—looked uncomfortable.

Vivienne Kernot designed some charming costumes for the *corps de ballet*, though the white and yellow costume for the principal dancer is too insipid. Her setting was well designed and unobtrusive even if it did look like *Wedding Bouquet* as the late and ever-to-be-lamented Rex Whistler might have done it.

The great success of the evening, which started off with Somes' *Summer Interlude*, was Cranko's *Beauty and the Beast* with Patricia Miller and David Poole. These two artists give such a sensitive performance in this delightful *pas de deux* that it has turned into a personal creation.

The performance finished with the second act of *Casse Noisette* in which Fifield and Blair danced a distinguished *pas de deux*, she is stronger technically than last year but she does not know how to use her head, specially in a supported *arabesque*—she should look at her cavalier as though she had some sort of feeling for him. It is not necessary to grin in a hard and flashing manner but there should be a feeling of sympathy between the two dancers which a slight inclination of the head, a softness of expression would help. Blair danced a brilliant variation but he should look to his stage manners—he looks at the audience as though he could not care less what they thought. It is all very well to develop presentation and showmanship but these should be coupled with humility (a few lessons from George Skibine would help).

I was struck, as always when renewing acquaintance with this company, what a collection of really fine dancers there are here. I think the time has now come to add some really important works to the repertoire, there are far too many ballets of the *divertissement* type.

During the season, Howard's *Assembly Ball* and De Valois' *The Prospect Before Us* will be revived. The new creations include two works by John Cranko, *Pineapple Poll* (Sullivan music and Osbert Lancaster decor), and *The Witch* (Ravel music) first created for New York City Ballet. The announced production of a two-act version of Delibes' *Sylvia*, with choreography by Frederick Ashton is still very problematical.

P. W.

On Saturday, September 30, *Trumpet Concerto* had a different cast with Patricia Miller and David Poole in the lead. The role is more suitable to Miller than Beriosova, for one thing she is shorter and she has a pert line which is in more accord with the music. I still feel that Fifield would be better than any of them. The trumpet playing was much better than on the first night. This ballet does not improve on second seeing and I think that young English dancers are unsuitable for this kind of thing, as they have not the hard brilliance that is needed.

In the same programme was Ashton's *Les Rendezvous* and it was interesting to compare two near-abstract works by two great choreographers. *Les Rendezvous* is one of Ashton's early works and is full of gaiety and invention, it is still a ballet that we can sit through with pleasure. *Trumpet Concerto* is the most recent work of one who has been creating masterpieces for a quarter of a century; so much is it worked to a formula that most of the audience could predict exactly what would happen before the curtain rose. Ashton today is in grave danger of being in exactly the same position. It would be interesting to know exactly how many genuinely creative years there are in anybody's life.

John Gilpin as the Hussar in Festival Ballet's Beau Danube (*Photo : Denis de Marney*)

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The programme started with Fokine's *Les Sylphides* with Svetlana Beriosova and David Blair in the principal roles. Beriosova is ideal for this type of ballet, her lovely line, softness, and complete understanding of romanticism, would have delighted the choreographer. She was well partnered by Blair who also danced a nice Mazurka, though he has not yet quite achieved the lyrical quality that is needed—he is apt to hurry certain movements such as that slow caressing of the extended leg. Stella Clair, excellent dancer though she is, was not right for the Prelude ; this most poetic of all variations is right outside her range. The *corps de ballet* have improved, in this work, since last year but they are still far removed from the moonlit wraiths of a poet's imagination.

El Destino and the *Giselle pas de deux*, completed a very long programme. The former seems to mean nothing at all now ; all that is left is an excellent score by Manuel Lazareno, which I like more, as I like the ballet less.

The *pas de deux* got the greatest applause in the whole programme and deservedly so. Not that I approve of isolated *pas de deux* for it seems a dreadful idea to take anything out of its context, but as this was never intended to be in the ballet originally, and was interpolated later with Burgmuller music (not Adam as the programme stated), there does not seem to be much harm in it. It is a delightful series of dances for two young people and Maryon Lane and David Blair dance it extremely well. Blair has a finish and showmanship that I have seldom seen in one of his age and his stage manners had vastly improved since the first night of the season.

★

BALLET RAMBERT opened a two weeks' season at the Kings Theatre, Hammersmith, on October 16. David Paltenghi's *Eve of St. Agnes* had its London *premiere* on the first night of the season. On October 23, another new work by Paltenghi will have its first performance. This is *Prismatic Variations* to Beethoven music, designed by Vivienne Kernot. Although an abstract work it concerns the breaking of primary colours by a prism.

Sara Luzita and Tutte Lemkow have joined the company. It may be remembered that Luzita was with the company before, and toured Australia with them.

FESTIVAL BALLET has continued its extremely successful tour of the provinces. Alicia Markova returned, after her recent operation for appendicitis, in Edinburgh. The company opens its first London season at the Stoll Theatre on October 24 with a programme consisting of the first performance of a new full-length production of *The Nutcracker*, followed by Massine's *Beau Danube*. It will be the first time that a full version of the former has been seen in England for many years. First given in St. Petersburg in 1892, it has been revived in many countries; here it was given by the Vic-Wells company in 1934 when Markova danced the Sugar Plum with Harold Turner. Later it was seen at the Alhambra with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Otherwise it is only the last act that is so well-known.

On Thursday, November 2, Markova and Dolin will dance in the new production of *Giselle* designed by Hugh Stevenson with production and choreography (after Coralli) by Anton Dolin. For full programmes of the first three weeks of this season, see our Ballet Dates column.

Dance and Dancers . . . . ABROAD

U. S. A.

There never seemed to be any doubt about the success of SADLER'S WELLS BALLET in America, but their opening programme on September 10 at the Metropolitan Opera House, consisting of the full *Swan Lake*, was as triumphant as their opening last year. Of this first night and the preceding journey over, RAY POWELL, one of the Company's principal character dancers writes :

The journey over here was very easy. We took off in our Stratocruiser at 10 p.m. The plane was full, nearly sixty of us, which seemed an awful lot of people in one aircraft. One comforting thing was that the crew who took us last year looked after us again. We flew in good weather to Iceland where we landed at 3 a.m. After a stop of an hour we took off again destined for New York.

This was to be a very long hop so we settled down to a good sleep. The plane was a strange sight. We all undressed, hair went up into curlers, housecoats, dressing-gowns and slippers were put on, and we made ourselves at home. The trip was smooth and we slept beautifully. At daylight we were high above the clouds though there was yet many hours to go. In the plane was a cocktail bar which we made good use of, though mainly for orangeade! As we were awfully hungry after breakfast the stewards brought out cakes, cheese, and biscuits, and we had a mad feast.

At last New York hove into sight. We all got dressed and landed without any trouble at all, in lovely weather. Customs and other formalities were soon through and off we went to the city, and were we pleased to see it again. We found the hotels comfortable and not far from the theatre.

Rehearsals started next day and we felt that we had never left New York at all. At the Metropolitan there is the most wonderful rehearsal room. It is huge and the whole company can do class together which makes life so much easier when we can rehearse in our own theatre. Also it is full of light and air as it is on the top floor, so different from our gloomy basement room in Kingsway Hall.

The city is just the same though the food is very expensive, more so than last year. The whole company is calmer this time although we know we have something to live up to. Fonteyn looks well and is dancing beautifully

I spent the week-end out of town at New Hope, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, which is really beautiful. One night I saw a show called the Musical Circus. On top of a hill there is a large circus tent which can be seen for miles when it is lit up. In this tent the stage is in the centre and the audience sit all round. The show, *Good News* (the old 1928 musical) was great fun. All entrances and exits have to be made down the aisles and usually at the run. A great many of the kids have their first attempt at show business here. A few of the principals are well known but the rest of the cast is new and quite unknown. The show was played fast and with great zest. Changes of set, which only entailed a few props, were made in half-light and it was possible to see what was happening. All great fun as it made you feel part of the show. The place was packed as people come from miles around, the vast number of huge and shiny cars was amazing.

Back in New York for Sunday which was our opening night. The day had been hot and damp, a great deal of rain, and the more it rained the more humid it got. At the Metropolitan all was bustle and excitement, which was very catching. The company on the stage were very jumpy, Fonteyn looked worried, Leslie Edwards looked rather pale, and the *pas de trois* for the first act were going through their variations.

All of a sudden the curtain was up and the heat from the audience hit us like a wave. Somes got a good reception when he came on and the first act got under way. The first act went straight into the second and the moment we had all waited for arrived—Fonteyn appeared. As she came on the cheers and applause drowned all music but she began to dance and for a short time she danced only to applause, this was a good start. I have seen her dance better in the second act but I have never seen her give a better performance. The whole company were in the wings watching and we were entranced. I stood with Elvin who was almost in tears because Fonteyn was so beautiful. We were not watching steps but a dancer who moved and carried the whole audience out of this world.

The third act and Fonteyn was tired, the heat almost unbearable. The *pas de deux* went without a flaw. Somes danced beautifully and looked very noble. Fonteyn's variation was lovely, very firm and crisp. Then came the *coda*—Somes' leaps were breathtaking and Fonteyn's *fouettés* fast and full of excitement. The *coda* became such a frenzy of dance and applause that as they began to reach the end it was like living in a storm. When they finished it was as if the heavens had opened, I have never heard such applause. It made me go cold down my spine. We could not have been more happy for Fonteyn as we are all so devoted to her. The evening came to a wonderful close and we knew that we had been welcomed back to America.

(Right) *Our correspondent with the Sadler's Wells Ballet in America, Ray Powell.*
(*Photo : Denis de Marney*)

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Second New York Report from RAY POWELL:

Sleeping Beauty went on and again had a great success. Fonteyn danced beautifully and now with the public,critics, and ballet company, she can do no wrong in her work. It is wonderful to feel an English girl has captured New York. We all have helped but it is Fonteyn's season and not a soul is jealous of that success.

Grey danced *Lac de Cygnes* but she got a bad press, and I feel it was, to a certain extent, justified. She acted all the time and this is one thing that she cannot do. The actual dancing of the role was very untidy. John Field, as The Prince, danced well. Last night they both danced again and this time she was as good as she was bad on the first night. All her acting was cut out and she danced simply and beautifully.

Checkmate has had a solid success again and Grey danced this very well. Pamela May is off with a bad knee which is bad luck. Gillian Lynn had big cheers last night for The Black Queen. Very much a woman, warm yet evil, and she also danced well.

Les Patineurs has also had a great success with all honours going to Brian Shaw. I must say he really deserved all that was said of him. He nearly fell on the first night but he danced so well and with such life that it did not matter. He seems to improve daily and now the *pas de trois* in *Lac des Cygnes* is a joy to watch.

Giselle has not been a success. The first night was so dead that we all felt awful. We seemed doomed to start with. Fonteyn danced beautifully but it is not yet Somes' ballet. The production was not what was expected. After *Lac des Cygnes* and *The Sleeping Beauty* they had hoped to be carried away by the production as well as the performance.

We have all discussed this a great deal. The American audience feel that we have eliminated all the magic and that it is now too free of nonsense—The Queen of the Wilis without a variation and no evil in her at all, no drama for Hilarion, no peasant boys, and most of the music taken too fast. The end of the second act, when Giselle is put away in the bushes, was the last straw. I have heard these complaints for days now and am tired of them though I am often struck by the truth of most of what is said. Our production has hardly altered since it was first given at Sadler's Wells.

Tonight Shearer dances Giselle and I hope she is successful. Her "Beauty" got a very good press and she really deserved all of it as she danced beautifully and looked wonderful. We all feel rather proud of Shearer as her position is no longer false, she is now a very good performer as well as dancer.

Last Monday on our free day we all went to Alden Talbot's house at Smoke Rise in New Jersey. It is a grey stone house set in woods and facing a lovely lake. This lake is full of islands and one of them has a small church on it. The sun shone all day and we were able to swim and boat to our heart's content. The fresh air was a joy and we were all very happy. We had just finished five *Sleeping Beautys* in three days and were dead. I am writing this after the Sunday matinee and we are all at home in the hotel, feet up, resting, radio on, and the girls next door making tea on their little stove. There is an awful lot of work and life here is not all glamour. Many a night the girls are too tired to go out after the show.

I have managed to see two shows. Carol Channing, the big ugly blonde is wonderful, in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. Menotti's *The Consul* is a brilliant piece of theatre plus thrilling music. At most of these shows one meets other members of the company also doing the rounds. I have hopes of seeing *South Pacific* tomorrow night but the tickets are like gold.

★

Choreographer Agnes de Mille has turned director for the new Cole Porter musical, *Out of This World*. Hanya Holm will do the choreography and Janet Collins, negro dancer, will dance the lead.

Oliver Smith, designer (*Rodeo*, *Fancy Free*, *Fall River Legend* and *Age of Anxiety*) and also director of the American National Ballet Theatre will produce a new musical called *Bless You All*. Helen Tamiris (*Annie Get Your Gun*) who will create dances for it, is using white and negro dancers together.

René Jeanmaire and Roland Petit rehearsing La Croqueuse de Diamants (*Photo: Keystone*)

FRANCE

Rosella Hightower, *prima ballerina* of the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas, is preparing a new ballet which will have its *première* this month at the Theatre des Champs Elysé s. The ballet, *Salome*, is based on the Oscar Wilde story; the music is by Richard Strauss (the opera *Salome*) and the d cor and costumes will be by Celia Hubbard who designed *Del Amor y de la Muerte* for that same company.

The total length of the ballet will be about eight minutes and will consist of a solo for Miss Hightower. An additional novelty will be the projection of shadows throughout Miss Hightower's dance.

On September 25, at the Theatre Marigny, Paris, Roland Petit presented his latest work entitled *La Croqueuse de Diamants*. The scenario is by Roland Petit and Alfred Adam; the music by Jean Michel Damase; d cor and costumes by Wakhevitch and lyrics by Raymond Queneau. The principal roles are as follows: *Le demenageur* (the remover), Roland Petit; *La croqueuse de diamants*, Renée Jeanmaire; *Le garcon de café* (the waiter), Gordon Hamilton.

GEORGE ADAMIAN, a Paris correspondent, writes:

La Croqueuse de Diamants is a pretty title for a ballet. But we have been presented with a work that smacks of the cinema and the operetta, in which the executants have very little of interest to express and where the dancers sing badly and dance little.

The unravelling of the story of the diamond cruncher is long. It is done to music that is reminiscent of George Gershwin and, distantly, of Sauget; and in which one searches for something of Jean Michel Damase who is, nevertheless, the composer.

The decor reproduces happily enough, and with poetry, the atmosphere that one finds in Paris in the market district, in front of a little restaurant.

The choreographic play is evolved with the assistance of words sung by the dancers themselves. Obviously actors cannot dance while singing. But one finds that in the *Croqueuse de Diamants* there is too much vocal interference. It stops the development of the action and makes it laborious to follow.

We have already had, with Ruth Page's *Frankie and Johnny*, occasion to see a mixed ballet with one part song. But in that case there was a choir of professionals who did not dance. By so doing, their singing actually supported the action of the dancers rendering their interpretation more persuasive.

Concerning the part of the ballet that was danced, it seemed as though an attempt was made to use the academic style and at the same time to maintain an atmosphere of roughness which was somehow incongruous to dancing on point as well as in the *adagio*. Thus one was treated to a brawl amongst bad boys directed in the manner of American Westerns.

One knows that *Croqueuse de Diamants* will be presented in the U.S.A. shortly. Thus New Yorkers, through the creation of Roland Petit and A. Adam, will be given an account of *Paris by Night* as seen through the eyes of visiting tourists in automobiles in the month of August.

Nevertheless, this work has been well received by Parisian audiences. Sincerely, I would not know what was responsible for their gratification.

It should be pointed out that Gordon Hamilton who has a reputation for being a fine dancer was a revelation as a singer.

Where are they now?

NAME	PREVIOUSLY WITH	HAS JOINED
Domini Callaghan	Three Arts Ballet	Television
Kathleen Gorham	Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet	Borovansky Ballet
Sara Luzita	In musicals	Ballet Rambert
Peggy Sager	Brussels Opera	Borovansky Ballet
Dorothy Stevenson	International Ballet	Borovansky Ballet
Danilo Burniak (now called Daniel Arensky)	Metropolitan Ballet and Florence Festival	Ballet de Paris
Kenneth Cope	Ambassador Ballet	State Theatre, Malmo
Paul Hammond	Brussels Opera	Borovansky Ballet
Michel de Lutry	Three Arts Ballet	Television
Tutte Lemko	In musicals	Ballet Rambert
Alex Martin	Metropolitan Ballet and Florence Festival	*Brigadoon* S.A. tour
Paul Guinwis	De Basil	Borovansky Ballet

Ballet Dates

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

Oct.	17	*Fete Etrange, The Vagabonds, Giselle (Pas de deux), Casse Noisette* (Act II)
	21 (M.)	*Les Sylphides, The Vagabonds, Trumpet Concerto, Facade*
	21 (E.)	*Trumpet Concerto* (precedes the opera *Hugh the Drover*)
	24	*Fete Etrange, Beauty and the Beast, Trumpet Concerto, Summer Interlude*
	25	*Summer Interlude* (precedes the opera *Hugh the Drover*)
	28 (M.)	*Swan Lake* (Act II), *Beauty and the Beast, Valses Nobles et Sentimentales, Summer Interlude*
	31	*Swan Lake* (Act II), *Assembly Ball, Trumpet Concerto, Facade*
Nov.	4 (M.)	*Assembly Ball, The Vagabonds, Valses Nobles et Sentimentales, Facade*
	7	*Les Sylphides, The Haunted Ballroom, Bluebird (Pas de deus), Tritch Tratch, Trumpet Concerto*
	11 (M.)	*Assembly Ball, Sea Change, Tritch Tratch, Jota Toledana, Casse Noisette* (Act II)

BALLET RAMBERT—KING'S THEATRE, HAMMERSMITH

Oct.	16	*Soiree Musicale, St. Agnes Eve, Kaleidoscope, Swan Lake*
	17	*Swan Lake, Soiree Musicale, Kaleidoscope, St. Agnes Eve*
	18	*Swan Lake, Soiree Musicale, St. Agnes Eve, Peter and the Wolf*
	19 (M.) (E.)	*Swan Lake, Soiree Musicale, St. Agnes Eve, Peter and the Wolf*
	20, 21 (M.) (E.)	*Les Sylphides, Winter Night, Kaleidoscope, Peter and the Wolf*
	23	*Les Sylphides, Prismatic Variations (premiere), Antonia, St. Agnes Eve*
	24	*Les Sylphides, Prismatic Variations, Antonia, St. Agnes Eve*
	25	*Swan Lake, Antonia, Prismatic Variations, Facade*
	26 (M.)	*Swan Lake, Czernyana, Prismatic Variations, Facade*
	26 (E.)	*Swan Lake, Antonia, Prismatic Variations, Facade*
	27	*Le Sylphides, Prismatic Variations, Antonia, St. Agnes Eve*
	28 (M.)	*Les Sylphides, Prismatic Variations, Czernyana, St. Agnes Eve*
	28 (E.)	*Les Sylphides, Prismatic Variations, Antonia, St. Agnes Eve*

BALLET RAMBERT ON TOUR

Nov.	6	Arts Theatre, Cambridge.
	13	Playhouse, Kidderminster
	20	Theatre Royal, Norwich
	27	New Theatre, Northampton
Dec.	4	Prince of Wales, Cardiff
	11	Richmond Theatre, Richmond

INTERNATIONAL BALLET

Oct.	2—14	Grand Theatre, Leeds
	16—21	Theatre Royal, Nottingham
	30—Nov. 11	Kings Theatre, Glasgow
Nov.	13—25	Theatre Royal, Newcastle
	27—Dec. 2	Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton

FESTIVAL BALLET AT THE STOLL THEATRE

Oct.	24	*The Nutcracker, Beau Danube*
	25 (M.)	*The Nutcracker, Beau Danube*
	25 (E.)	*The Nutcracker, Beau Danube*
	26	*The Nutcracker, Beau Danube*
	27	*Capriccioso, Les Sylphides, Petrouchka*
	28 (M.)	*Les Sylphides, Capriccioso, Petrouchka*
	28 (E.)	*The Nutcracker, Beau Danube*
	30	*The Nutcracker, Beau Danube*
	31	*Capriccioso, Les Sylphides, Petrouchka*
Nov.	1 (M.)	*Les Sylphides, Capriccioso Petrouchka*
	1 (E.)	*Les Sylphides, Capriccioso, Petrouchka*
	2	*Fiesta, Giselle, Beau Danube*
	3	*The Nutcracker, Beau Danube*
	4 (M.)	*Les Sylphides, Capriccioso, Petrouchka*
	4 (E.)	*Fiesta, Giselle, Beau Danube*
	6	*Capriccioso, Swan Lake, Beau Danube*
	7	*Swan Lake, Capriccioso, Petrouchka*
	8 (M.)	*The Nutcracker, Beau Danube*
	8 (E.)	*Fiesta, Giselle, Beau Danube*
	9	*Capriccioso, Swan Lake, Petrouchka*
	10	*Fiesta, Giselle, Beau Danube*
	11 (M.)	*Capriccioso, Swan Lake, Petrouchka*
	11 (F.)	*Capriccioso, Swan Lake, Beau Danube*

Clubs

SECOND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF BALLET CLUBS

On Saturday afternoon, September 30, the Second Annual General Meeting of The Association of Ballet Clubs was held at The Royal Academy of Dancing, 154, Holland Park Avenue.

Representatives from various ballet clubs within a reasonable distance from London attended. Presided over by the Association's chairman, Mr. G. B. L. Wilson, the chief business of the meeting was the election of new officers, a proposal to ally foreign ballet clubs with a view to the internationalisation of ballet clubs and the practicability of acquiring dance films for club meetings.

Officers elected for the new term are as follows :

Mr. G. B. L. Wilson, Chairman, Mr. L. A. Fortune (Lewisham Ballet-Theatre Club), Vice-Chairman, Miss Christine Greenfield (Willesden Ballet Club), Secretary, Dr. J. Pettit (Merseyside Ballet Circle), Deputy-Secretary and Mrs. M. Treasure (R.A.D. Production Club), Treasurer.

Mr. A. H. Franks, author of *Ballet for Film and Television* and also a member of the committee, presided over a discussion of the accessability of dance films for clubs interested in acquiring them. He indicated that there are a number of such films available for a reasonable expenditure. He also pointed out that by renting local cinemas an audience could be sufficiently enlarged to render such showings profitable to club organisers. Due to a great demand and to the limited number of prints, in some cases, of dance films, he urged club members to place their order well in advance of the showing date, and that he would gladly assist members in securing the films they wanted.

The committee will make an effort to contact ballet clubs outside of England (the Dominions etc.) in connection with the internationalisation of ballet clubs. Much interest has already been shown in the movement by clubs in Copenhagen.

In accordance with the constitution of the Association of Ballet Clubs, their next general meeting must take place sometime before December of 1951. As yet no exact date has been fixed.

There are in the British Isles some forty clubs. These are by far the best organisations to gather together all those who are interested in ballet so that they can freely discuss it and, in some cases, practice it. If any reader wants to know the address of the nearest club, we shall always be pleased to send them the address. Just send a postcard to The Editor, DANCE AND DANCERS, Mersey House, 132, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4, and put the word "Clubs" on the top left-hand corner.

Ballet for beginners

These columns are for those of you who have only recently become interested in ballet. Each month we shall give you the story of a famous ballet, a glossary of some of the expressions that are used, and other articles to help you to understand more about the art.

THE STORY OF A BALLET

LE BEAU DANUBE

FIRST given in 1924 during a *Soirée de Paris* organised by Comte Etienne de Beaumont, with choreography by Leonide Massine, music of Johanne Strauss orchestrated by Roger Desmormiére and scenery by Polunin (based on a drawing by Constantine Guys). This first version was in two scenes but when the work was revived for the de Basil Company in 1933 it was condensed into a single scene, and that is how it is always given today.

The time is 1860 and it is a public holiday in the Vienna Prater. A Park Attendant sweeps up leaves, an artist tries to paint a picture, children are skipping, and pretty milliners dance and make merry with salesmen and dandies. The First Hand at a local hat shop starts a flirtation with the artist, but presently all eyes are on a dashing young Hussar who has come to meet his fiancée. This young girl is strolling with her parents who give their consent to her walking with the Hussar. The arrival of the manager of some strolling players caused a lot of excitement and having announced the show he goes off to bring on the Street Dancer and the Strong Man. The Street Dancer recognised the Hussar as a former lover which causes an embarrassing situation. The young fiancée faints and her parents lead her off. Left alone, the Street Dancer and the Hussar try to recapture their former love to the strains of the *Blue Danube* waltz. The young girl returns and vanquishes her rival. The parents returning in search of their daughter are not pleased at the idea of a reunion but their younger daughter induces them to bestow their blessing and the lovers are reunited in a general dance.

The whole work has a gaiety that has made it always popular but in spite of its apparent simplicity it is full of remarkable invention. When Massine himself dances the Hussar the ballet has an added verve, his bearing gives the role a dashing dignity that no other dancer seems able to achieve. The role of the Street Dancer will for ever be associated with Alexandra Danilova who manages to combine sluttishness with nobility.

GLOSSARY

Adagio (in French, *Adage*) in class, means the exercises which follow "centre practice" (*i.e.*, not at the *barre*, but in the middle of the room). These consist mostly of balancing and placing in attitudes, arabesques, etc., in order to develop a dancer's sense of line and balance. In the theatre, this word means a slow *pas de deux* in which the ballerina is supported by her cavalier who lifts her, and supports her in all balancing movements.

Arabesques. Positions in ballet dancing on one foot with the arms, body and legs forming diagonal or oblique lines (slightly curved, as in Moorish architecture, hence the name).

Déboulés (meaning to unroll or run out). This is the technical term for the small turns in the first position which end many *soli* or variations.

Pliés (bends). The basis of all dancing is to bend and rise. Good *pliés* relax and tighten the tendons and muscles in turn, which gives more elevation, strength and elasticity to a dancer. The correct depth of a *plié* is when the thighs are horizontal.

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